

PROCESSOR

Products, News & Information Data Centers Can Trust. Since 1979

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COVER FOCUS

Companies To Watch

We profile five companies we think are worthy of your data center's attention.

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Bringing Technology To Furniture

Decades Of Computer Experience Bolster Hergo's Furniture & Enclosure Options

by Christian Perry

• • •

AGILITY IS A VALUABLE TRAIT for any enterprise, but in the IT industry, it's generally required to successfully traverse the constantly changing technology landscape. Companies unable to adjust to this change

inevitably fall by the wayside, but Hergo tapped into its roots to build a foundation that helped the company become a premier provider of computer furniture and rack-mount enclosures.

Hertz Computer Corp. launched in 1982 as one of the first companies to sell IBM

PC clones. But as Gateway, Compaq, and Dell seized increasingly larger shares of the PC market, Hertz grew obsolete as its sister company, Hergo Ergonomic Support Systems—more commonly known simply as Hergo—gained momentum. With a history of selling and implementing hardware and software to Fortune 500 companies, the move toward designing, building, and selling IT furniture seemed natural.

"As computers became smaller, there became a need for a type of furniture that would hold this micro equipment," says Lisa



Cunningham, assistant vice president of sales for Hergo (888/222-7270; www.hergo.com). "Remember, prior to that time, there was no need for furniture because everyone was connected to a huge mainframe. I remember going to the New York Stock Exchange and [to] many large companies, where I saw that they were actually starting to put smaller computers on the mainframe because they didn't have any other place to put them."

Before long, computers, monitors, and keyboards were sitting on floors and dilapidated tables because ergonomic and space-saving solutions had yet to make an appearance in the market. Along came Hergo and its "technical furniture," which helped to create a booming ergonomic business that found initial success in the early 1990s and continues today.

An Eye Toward Quality

Hergo offers a wide range of furniture options, from open racks, relay racks, and enclosures to flat-panel arms, computer desks, and cable management products. According to Cunningham, Hergo's computer background gives it the ability to create unique and innovative designs that are user-friendly.

"When it comes to the 19-inch racks and enclosures, we put a great deal of

Go to Page 7

Data Center Industrialization

Bring Standardization To The Data Center

by Sixto Ortiz Jr.

• • •

THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING and building a brand new data center is much like building cathedrals once was during the Middle Ages: Developers, as medieval architects and laborers once did, often start with a "white board" approach and essentially reinvent the wheel each time a new data center development and construction project is undertaken. While it doesn't take decades to get a brand new data center constructed, the fact remains that data center builders often ignore best practices that

could make projects more successful, reduce costs, and avoid common pitfalls.

But, the tide appears to be turning. A variety of factors are now driving the task of data center development and construction toward standardization. Standardization may just save you a bundle on your next data center project.

Drivers For Standardization

Building a data center is a complex endeavor, so it seems logical that standardization should be a common practice. Even though standardization in data center

development and construction remains the exception rather than the norm today, there are a number of drivers accelerating the move toward standardization.

Chris Crosby, senior vice president at Digital Realty Trust (www.digitalrealtytrust.com), says there are four main factors driving the trend toward data center design/build standardization: complexity, economics, time to market, and the convergence of three technical trends (rise of high-density computing, energy usage and heat dissipation needs, and the increased cost of energy).

Complexity, says Crosby, is accelerating in such a manner that it is simply too difficult for one person or team of people to have the expertise needed to acquire, design, build,

Go to Page 7

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1. What is the size of your company (how many employees)?

- Less than 10
- 200 to 499
- 10 to 99
- 500 to 999
- 100 to 199
- 1,000+

2. How often do you purchase computer hardware/software?

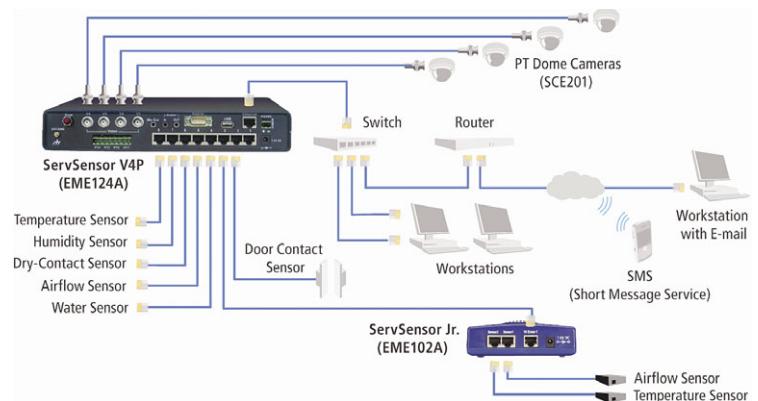
- Weekly
- Quarterly
- Bi-weekly
- Annually
- Monthly
- No Involvement

3. What is your annual computer hardware/software purchasing budget?

- \$0 to \$9,999
- \$10,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$249,999
- \$250,000 to \$499,999
- \$500,000 to \$999,000
- \$1,000,000+

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

FEBRUARY 13, 2009



Black Box AlertWerks II ServSensor V4P (EME124A) offers real-time environmental and video monitoring.

\$1,395

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Black Box AlertWerks II ServSensor V4P

The AlertWerks II ServSensor V4P from Black Box gives you real-time environmental and video monitoring. It enables you to integrate environmental sensors and surveillance cameras into one seamless remote monitor that watches over your business, giving you vital information and peace of mind.

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Plug up to eight AlertWerks II Intelligent Sensors into the RJ-45 ports; the autosense capability makes setup fast and easy. You can connect up to four pan/tilt/zoom cameras or standard analog cameras, including your existing security cameras, and use the system

to monitor and store photographic records. Move and zoom cameras via the easy-to-use Web interface without the need for expensive controllers.

The Web interface also generates graphs for each sensor, and the event log history can be downloaded in a text file or remotely polled and saved automatically to a PC.

The Notification Wizard alerts you to changes in sensor status in real time via audible alarm, SNMP trap, email (with photo or without), text message to your cell phone/PDA, or fax.

Put your mind at ease with the AlertWerks II ServSensor V4P, your all-in-one monitoring solution.



STORAGE

JANUARY 30, 2009

NETWORKING & VPN

Caplan™ Web console and dashboards are designed to make capacity planning as easy as possible.
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www.neptuny.com



Capacity Planning: Critical For Reducing Costs, Avoiding IT Infrastructure Risks Neptuny Caplan™

Caplan™ is the business-aware capacity planning solution for data centers and networks, enabling an enterprise-wide, industrialized, ITIL-aligned capacity management process.

Caplan™ allows companies to optimize their infrastructures, safely virtualize and consolidate their data centers, and evaluate change scenarios with respect to forecasted business demands, while being automatically notified about critical capacity and demand trends.

Caplan™ provides performance and workload analysis, time forecasting, what-if scenario simulations, and advanced reporting capabilities for multiple domains (such as physical/virtual servers, storage, networks, and facilities).

Caplan™ makes capacity planning easy: analyses and reports can be automated, capacity issues can be identified, and data can easily be

accessed through Web interfaces and dashboards tailored to user-specific roles. Caplan™ has zero impact on production environments because of its agentless architecture, its out-of-the-box connectors to major management platforms and native tools, and its ability to easily integrate custom (IT and non-IT) data sources.

Caplan™ has helped many customers reduce both operating and capital costs of their IT infrastructures and avoid SLA violations and risks due to the inability to cope with business demands. By correlating IT with business metrics, Caplan™ has also helped organizations realize the real value of their IT investments.



DATA CENTER

JANUARY 23, 2009

DataCore Does For Storage What VMware Does For Servers

DataCore SANsymphony

Fairway Consulting Group offers services based on best-of-breed virtualization technologies, including storage, server, desktop, and disaster recovery. As a channel partner with several virtualization manufacturers, FCG helps companies focus on sustainability, data growth, performance demands, end-of-life hardware, and disaster recovery.

FCG is a Premier Channel Partner with DataCore Software, with products focusing on storage virtualization, management, and monitoring. DataCore SANmelody, SANsymphony, SANmaestro, and Traveller CPR

offer a combination of features and functionality to meet the needs of any enterprise.

DataCore SANsymphony overcomes the high cost barrier and complexity of traditional SANs by converting x86-based servers (physical or virtual) into fully capable SAN controllers that can virtualize any raw disk and serve them to application servers over iSCSI or Fibre Channel.

DataCore delivers the flexibility that conventional hardware virtualization cannot provide. And with DataCore, you can leverage

your existing hardware and add new hardware later on the fly, with no interruptions.

DataCore's SAN solution features include:

- Hardware independence
- 65% increased storage utilization
- True active/active high availability
- Asynchronous IP Mirroring
- Snapshot (COW or complete image)
- iSCSI and Fibre Channel-ready
- 100% investment protection on upgrades
- Tertiary Mirroring
- Continuous Data Protection

DataCore provides best-of-breed storage virtualization.
(866) 516-5491
www.fairwayconsulting.com



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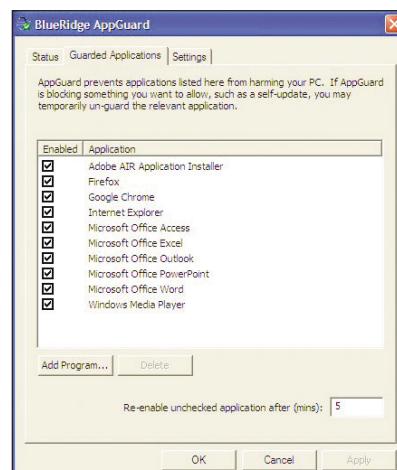
editor@processor.com
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www.Processor.com

SECURITY

JANUARY 23, 2009



Blue Ridge/Secure AppGuard protects PCs from viruses and zero-day malware attacks that legacy solutions are unable to identify or stop.

\$24.95
(703) 631-0700
www.blueridgenetworks.com

More Than Double PC Protection From Malware

Blue Ridge/Secure AppGuard

Blue Ridge/Secure AppGuard is an antimalware solution that protects PCs from attack by the latest generation of sophisticated malware threats, increasing endpoint security coverage to address more than 90% of known and unknown vulnerabilities. AppGuard is able to prevent machines from executing the harmful instructions delivered by zero-day and similar malware, neutralizing the attack until a patch is made available and can be installed.

Secure AppGuard is unique because, unlike legacy antivirus and antispyware products, it does not rely on signatures that are quickly outdated or require constant monitoring and tuning of policy rules. Secure AppGuard prevents an application from executing instructions that would indicate it has been hijacked by malware. Users can safely continue working knowing neither corporate nor personal data will be compromised.

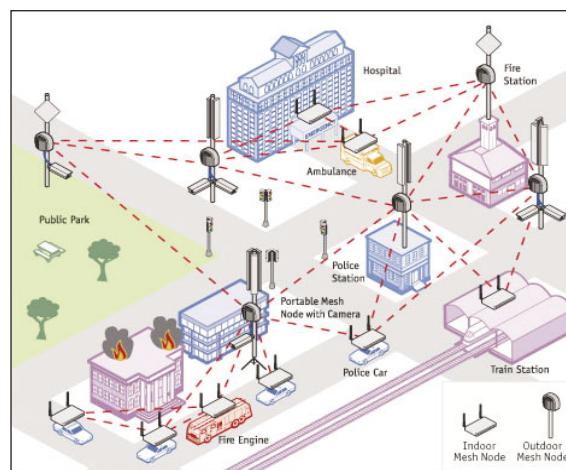
Secure AppGuard is preconfigured to safeguard the applications most targeted by hackers, including Web browsers, Microsoft Office, and media players. Additional applications are easily added to the guarded list by system administrators or end users. In addition to these traditional attack vectors, Secure AppGuard also provides the ability to block attacks from USB devices such as thumb drives and also stops ActiveX controls from installing malware.

Secure AppGuard operates transparently to Windows XP and Vista users. If it encounters a problem, it simply blocks the application from performing the malicious action and alerts the user by flashing the Secure AppGuard icon. It also writes an entry in the Windows Event Log to support enterprise reporting requirements.



NETWORKING & VPN

DECEMBER 26, 2008



Firetide's HotPort 6000 wireless mesh nodes and HotPoint 4000 wireless access points enable standalone wireless networks.

HotPort 6000 mesh nodes: \$1,295 to \$2,995; HotPoint 4000 access points: \$395 to \$995
(408) 399-7771
www.firetide.com

Standalone Wireless Networking

Firetide HotPort 6000 & HotPoint 4000

If there is anything better than reliable alarm monitoring and response supervision technology, it's the wireless version of those abilities. Companies and individuals in a variety of fields, such as emergency services and security, would benefit from the ability to wirelessly receive and act on alarms. A new wireless system of this nature has been developed by Digitize using wireless mesh technology from Firetide.

Firetide's technology facilitates a cost-effective, rapid deployment and easy installation, enabling employees to set up a stand-alone network without the need for IT personnel. The networks operate in the 2.4GHz, 4.9GHz, and 5GHz frequency ranges. Firetide HotPort 6000 mesh nodes and HotPoint 4000 access points are equipped with HotView network management software and Firetide WLAN Controller soft-

ware, respectively, and feature WPA2 (Wi-Fi Protected Access 2), WEP (Wired Equivalent Privacy), and AES encryption for security, as well as a proprietary encapsulation technology.

The Firetide HotPort 6000 wireless mesh nodes and HotPoint 4000 wireless access points come in both indoor and outdoor versions, enabling users to set up a network in virtually any location.

In addition to being cost-effective, the networks are self-contained and easily repositioned, so users can adjust to their changing needs on the fly.



SECURITY

JANUARY 2, 2009



plusID™

plusID identity verification tokens work with existing door readers for an easy upgrade to the heightened security of biometrics.

(434) 293-4033
www.Privaris.com

PRIVARIS®

Easily Add Biometric Security To Your Data Center

Privaris plusID Personal Identity Verification Token

Data centers require "proof-positive" identity verification to properly secure the enterprises' valuable assets. But most biometric access control solutions entail the costly and complex installation of specialized readers and modifications to backend systems.

The plusID personal identity verification token from Privaris offers an easy and cost-effective path to the heightened security of biometrics — without ripping and replacing equipment or installing specialized access control software. plusID works with your existing door readers for rapid enterprise deployment. Simply issue authorized staff a plusID token in place of a standard access card to provide them with a secure credential that only they can use.

plusID outputs a standard card signal only after its rightful owner matches their live fingerprint to the print securely enrolled and stored on their device. The only installation required is the issuance of a new card number in your existing PACS (physical access control system).

Once inside the data center, the multi-function plusID also supports logical/IT access for secure logon to PCs and laptops — no need for backend systems or specialized middleware. All of the biometric processing happens on the device.

plusID puts the convenience of biometric processing directly in the hands of its user, eliminating the organization's liability for maintaining and securing biometric databases.

STORAGE

DECEMBER 19, 2008

Get Onsite & Offsite Backup

Barracuda Backup Service

The Barracuda Backup Service is an affordable, integrated local and offsite data backup and disaster recovery solution that combines an onsite appliance with a monthly subscription that replicates data to two offsite locations. Combining local and offsite storage provides the best of both worlds—onsite backups for the fastest restore times and secure, offsite storage for disaster recovery.

Designed for organizations of any size, the Barracuda Backup Server creates a local copy of data and efficiently transfers the data offsite without any additional burden on production servers. Offsite storage is monitored and managed by Barracuda Central as part of the Barracuda Backup Subscription, and tech support and emergency restores are included, as well.

Deployed in varied, complex IT environments, the Barracuda Backup Service protects mission-critical business information, utilizes industry-standard networking protocols to access data for backup, and is compatible with all major operating systems.

The Barracuda Backup Service Web control panel makes it easy to manage and back up data to multiple units at one or more locations—from anywhere. It also provides control of settings, reports, restores, statistics, and account information in order to manage Barracuda Backup Servers and Barracuda Backup Subscription plans. In addition, customers receive automated alert notifications via the Web control panel when conditions affecting backup service are detected.

Barracuda Backup Service
Integrates Local & Secure Offsite
Backup For Disaster Recovery
Starts at \$99 per month
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www.barracudanetworks.com



Graphics Chips Slump

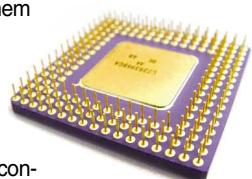
Citing the economic climate and weak demand in the PC industry, Jon Peddie Research has revealed that graphics chip shipments dropped sharply for the fourth quarter. Sales fell about 35% compared to the third quarter and 28% compared to the same period last year. There were about 72.4 million graphics chips shipped in the fourth quarter, compared to 100.5 million the previous year and 111.3 million in the third quarter. The decline marks the first time quarterly shipments from the third quarter outpaced those of the third quarter since 2000. Intel, Nvidia, and AMD, three major names in graphics chip production, each saw their shipments decline; Nvidia's shipments dropped 34.3%, AMD's fell 23.8%, and Intel's shipments slid 20.9%.

NEC To Lay Off Workers

Electronics maker NEC has announced that it plans to lay off 20,000 workers, closing some factories and pulling out of some business areas. Of the total layoffs, 8,000 will come from Japan and the remaining 12,000 will be from overseas. No details were given as to which divisions will be closed, but cuts will be made from both part-time and full-time employees. NEC also altered its predictions for its current fiscal year, ending next month, from a profit of 15 billion yen to an expected loss of 290 billion yen, which it attributes to economic downturn, investment write-downs, and restructuring. NEC currently employs 150,000 workers.

Chipmakers Talk Mergers

Toshiba and NEC are currently negotiating a merger of their respective chip-manufacturing operations to combat weak demand and falling prices. Sources close to the private talks claim that Toshiba hopes to spin off its system chip operations and merge them with NEC Electronics, NEC's semiconductor business. Toshiba's chief executive, Atsutoshi Nishida, sees consolidation as the only way system chipmakers will survive the current economic storm and flourish globally. In an official statement, NEC Electronics said it plans to restructure, cut costs by \$890 million over two years, and eliminate 1,200 contract jobs in addition to its recently announced 20,000-job workforce reduction. Other reports indicate that NEC has been talking with Fujitsu regarding possible consolidation of both firms' chipmaking operations.



Panasonic To Cut 15,000 Workers

Japanese electronics giant Panasonic will slash 15,000 jobs by March 2010, joining an increasing list of electronics companies announcing cuts in response to dismal Q3 results and year-end outlooks. The reductions focus on closing factories, says Panasonic, none of which are located in the United States.

WATCH THE STOCKS

This information provides a quick glimpse of current and historical stock prices and trends for 14 major companies in the technology market.

Company	Symbol	Year Ago	Jan. 30 \$	Feb. 6 \$	% change from previous week
AMD	AMD	\$6.74	\$2.19	\$2.41	▲ 10.05%
CA	CA	\$24.07	\$18.11	\$18.56	▲ 2.48%
Cisco Systems	CSCO	\$23.08	\$15.07	\$17.04	▲ 13.07%
Dell	DELL	\$19.07	\$9.56	\$9.46	▼ 1.05%
Google	GOOG	\$501.71	\$338.83	\$371.28	▲ 9.58%
HP	HPQ	\$42.16	\$34.79	\$36.85	▲ 5.92%
IBM	IBM	\$103.59	\$91.98	\$96.14	▲ 4.52%
Intel	INTC	\$19.92	\$13	\$14.73	▲ 13.31%
McAfee	MFE	\$32.23	\$30.58	\$30.13	▼ 1.47%
Microsoft	MSFT	\$28.52	\$17.19	\$19.66	▲ 14.37%
Oracle	ORCL	\$19.68	\$17	\$17.97	▲ 5.71%
Red Hat Software	RHT	\$18.26	\$14.71	\$16.19	▲ 10.06%
Sun Microsystems	JAVA	\$16.78	\$4.20	\$5.73	▲ 36.43%
Symantec	SYMC	\$17.78	\$15.47	\$16.06	▲ 3.81%

NOTE: This information is meant for reference only and should not be used as a basis for buy/sell decisions.

Japanese manufacturing plants will bear half the layoffs; the rest will come from the international workforce. Panasonic's Q3 results showed a net loss of 63.1 billion yen, or about \$710 million, with components and devices sales hit hardest. Net income projection for the year was revised from a profit of 30 billion yen to a loss of 380 billion yen.

Microsoft To Focus On Two Windows 7 Versions

Microsoft will be streamlining the Windows 7 product lineup, focusing on two primary editions: Windows 7 Home Premium and Windows 7 Professional. The company says those two versions of the upcoming operating system will meet most users' needs. With that in mind, though, Microsoft will offer other versions that will be sold only to niche markets. Examples include an Enterprise edition for its biggest enterprise customers; Home Basic for emerging markets; and Starter edition, only available on systems from OEMs. As part of the changes in Windows 7, Microsoft is making sure that all versions are supersets of one another, so upgrading from one version to another won't result in a loss of features.

Managed Service Providers See Growth

Providers of managed and hosted services appear to be bucking the trend of declining profits, according to a recent report from AMI-Partners. The report shows that managed service providers expect their revenues to increase by about 20% during the next 12 months. On average, service providers earn a 41% margin on sales of managed IT services, 36% on Internet services, and 35% on custom software development. AMI Senior Analyst Avinash Arun says that this is leading more companies to offer additional services and support such as integration, systems maintenance, and training.

Microsoft To Offer New Support Option

Microsoft announced a new add-on for its Microsoft Services Premier Support program. The new option, Premier Mission Critical Support, will offer guaranteed response times of as little as 30 minutes, 24 hours a day, with financial credits if the response takes longer. Through Premier Mission Critical Support, customers will have access to a dedicated phone line and expedited access to product development teams. The new offering covers Microsoft SQL Server 2005 SP2 and SP3, SQL Server 2008, Server 2003, and Server 2008 and will initially be available only in English, although support in other languages is expected to be available in April.

IBM Launches Project Match

IBM is offering previously laid-off employees job opportunities overseas in a program it calls Project Match. As part of the program, the company plans to assist former workers with

travel expenses and visa arrangements associated with transferring overseas. The job opportunities are available in developing markets such as India, China, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, and the United Arab Emirates. IBM says that workers would be paid according to each location's norms, which could be significantly less than what they earned in the United States. According to Alliance@IBM, an unofficial employee group at IBM, more than 4,000 workers have been laid off since last month, but IBM has not confirmed specific numbers.

Standardizing Hard Drive Encryption

A new standard has emerged for hardware-based encryption of storage devices such as hard drives. The Trusted Computing Group, which numbers among its members such manufacturers as Seagate, IBM, and Samsung, finalized three specifications for the standard. For PC clients, there's the Opal Security Subsystem Class Specification; for the data center, there's the Enterprise Security Subsystem Class Specification; and for data traffic among devices over SCSI, Fibre Channel, SAS, or ATA protocols, there is the Storage Interface Interactions Specification. An optional Trusted Platform Module can work in conjunction with compatible drives to lock down security credentials.



Hitachi Restates Forecast For Its Fiscal Year

A revised forecast indicates a big loss instead of a modest gain for Hitachi's fiscal year, which ends March 31. The company now expects to post a \$7.8 billion (700 billion yen) loss in place of the 15 billion yen profit predicted Oct. 30, 2008. Pronounced weakness in the industrial, automotive, and semiconductor industries have led to plummeting revenue in



Hitachi's Electronic Devices, Power & Industrial Systems, Digital Media & Consumer Products, and High Functional Materials & Components segments. A few days after announcing its revised forecast, the company announced a sizable reshuffling of executive personnel and planned layoffs of an unspecified number of employees.

Cybercrime Costs Reach \$1 Trillion

Last year saw international businesses lose about \$1 trillion due to data theft and computer crime, according to a recent study by McAfee. In a survey of more than 800 chief information officers from the United States and seven other nations, losses of and damage to intellectual property were evident. Lost data cost them \$4.6 billion, and cleanup due to data breaches cost \$600 million. Additionally, 42% of the survey participants feel that laid-off workers are the greatest threat to enterprise security.

Apple, AT&T Face More Lawsuits Over iPhone

More lawsuits have been filed against both Apple and AT&T regarding the performance of the 3G iPhone. The lawsuits claim 3G iPhones are flawed devices and do not work as advertised on AT&T's 3G network. Although independent studies have found that the majority of the connectivity problems lie in congested networks, the cases cite a report from the Swedish engineering publication *Ny Teknik*, which says the handsets aren't sensitive enough to adequately deliver the 3G signal. The lawsuits are seeking an injunction to prevent both companies from spreading "false" advertising and are seeking punitive damages.

Upcoming IT Events

Are you looking to learn more about data center or IT topics? Network with some of your peers? Consider joining a group of data center professionals. If you don't see a meeting listed in your area, visit www.afcom.com, www.aitp.org, or www.issa.org to find a chapter near you.

FEBRUARY -

AITP Pittsburgh

Feb. 16, 6 p.m.
Sokol Club-Southside
2912 E. Carson St.
Pittsburgh, Pa.
www.aitp-pgh.org

• • • •
AITP Southwest Missouri

Feb. 17
Springfield, Mo.
www.swmo-aitp.org
/index.html

• • • •

OKLAHOMA CITY AITP Chapter

Feb. 17
Oklahoma City, Okla.
www.aitp.org/organization/chapters/chapterhome.jsp?chapter=40

• • • •

ISSA Oklahoma City

Feb. 18
Spaghetti Warehouse
101 E. Sheridan Ave.
Oklahoma City, Okla.
www.issa-okc.org

• • • •

AITP Omaha

Feb. 19, 5:30 p.m.
Seraph Corp.
Omaha, Neb.
www.aitpomaha.org

• • • •

AITP Tarheel

Feb. 19, 6 p.m.
Foothill Brewery
638 W. 4th St.
Winston-Salem, N.C.
www.aitp.org

• • • •

Technology Convergence Conference

Feb. 19
Santa Clara Convention Center
Santa Clara, Calif.
www.technologyconvergenceconference.com

• • • •

ISSA Upstate SC

Feb. 20, 11 a.m.
NuVox
301 N. Main St., Suite 5000
Greenville, S.C.
www.upstate-issa.org/index.htm

• • • •

Southern California Linux Expo

February 20-22
Los Angeles Airport Westin
Los Angeles, Calif.
www.socallinuxexpo.org

• • • •

Gartner Wireless & Mobile Summit

Feb. 23-25
Chicago, Ill.
www.gartner.com/it/page.jsp?id=669708

• • • •

ISSA Des Moines

Feb. 23, 11:30 a.m.
1401 50th St., Suite 200
West Des Moines, Iowa

• • • •

AITP Akron

Feb. 24, 6 p.m.
Lindsay's Amber Restaurant
1500 Canton Road
Akron, Ohio
www.akron-aitp.org/index.htm

• • • •

ISSA Baltimore

Feb. 25, 4:30 p.m.
Sparta Inc.
7110 Samuel Morse Drive, Suite 200
Columbia, Md.
www.issa-balt.org

• • • •

MARCH

Comptel Plus Spring 2009 Convention & Expo

March 2-5
Dallas, Texas
www.comptel.org

• • • •

AITP-Central Idaho

March 11, 11:45 a.m.
Owyhee Plaza Hotel
1109 Main St.
Boise, Idaho
[www.boisestate.edu/dpma/dpmaci/centida.html](http://boisestate.edu/dpma/dpmaci/centida.html)

Buildout Potential

Petroleum Company Turns To Colocation Facility For Needed Infrastructure & Power

by Robyn Weisman

MADRID, SPAIN-BASED REPSOL YBF, one of the largest petroleum companies in the world, needed to find a facility that could handle the buildout of its Kaleidoscope supercomputer. The Kaleidoscope project involves seeking out oil reserves that are as much as 40,000 feet below the surface of the Gulf of Mexico and requires processor-intensive technologies to perform RTM

Although Repsol looked at several colocation facilities to house Kaleidoscope, only Houston, Texas-based CyrusOne (www.cyrusone.com) provided Repsol with the infrastructure, power, and cooling Repsol needed both for now and in the future, while offering the utmost in redundancy and efficient "green" power, says Daniel Carll, systems administrator at Repsol.

According to Carll, Repsol decided against building out Kaleidoscope in-house



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(Reverse Time Migration) seismic-imaging algorithms to search for these reserves.

Repsol (www.repsol.com/es_en) decided against building out its in-house data center in its Houston, Texas, office to accommodate Kaleidoscope (www.bsc.es/projects/kaleidoscope_tmp), even though it is a good size to handle it, says Repsol's Director of Geophysics Francisco Ortigosa.

"We have learned the complexity of managing a [data center], at least [in the] environment of our industry, increases exponentially with the complexity of the center," says Ortigosa.

because Repsol didn't think it had the power necessary to run the supercomputer. "We would have to have added four to five more air-conditioning units, and we also would have to have [gotten permits for] our utility provider to bring more power to the building," Carll says. "It could actually take up to a year to get it run through the building because you also have worry because all the power here is underground, and they would have to be retrenched to add more power capacity here," Carll says.

Moreover, even if Repsol had the necessary power to support Kaleidoscope, the

The Kaleidoscope supercomputer needs a tremendous amount of power because of the simulation required to generate its RTM imaging to search for oil fields up to 10 times faster than conventional technology.

process of modifying the physical area to handle it requires considerable effort. "Whenever you lease from a building, you also have to go through building management and lots of hoops just to even get one thing done," Carll says. In addition, an architect would have needed to review the structural integrity of the building just to move the racks into the in-house data center.

Fastest Buildout Ever

The Kaleidoscope supercomputer needs a tremendous amount of power because of the simulation required to generate its RTM imaging to search for oil fields up to 10 times faster than conventional technology. To achieve this feat, Kaleidoscope uses 600 IBM PowerXCell 8i processors contained in eight standard hardware cabinets over 22 square feet of floor space. Within this setup, CyrusOne must provide 100% uptime performance, along with the power and cooling infrastructure needed to operate 750 watts per square foot, with a power efficiency of 0.9 gigaflops per watt.

Carll says that at the beginning stages, Repsol had one blade center chassis, and CyrusOne brought in two racks to commence the buildout. According to Carll, CyrusOne had the fastest buildout that he has ever seen on a data center. "It was just a matter of less than a month of having our equipment and being able to have it live," says Carll. "Most of the other data centers were probably going to be at least three to six months just for the buildout of the new power infrastructure that they would have to put in" to accommodate the supercomputer.

Because CyrusOne is carrier-neutral, Carll found it easy to get connectivity there. "The slowest part of getting the connectivity wasn't us waiting on them to run the patch cables, but our provider configuring their switch for us," says Carll.

Although security wasn't a driver in choosing CyrusOne, Carll says that Repsol was nevertheless impressed that CyrusOne provided security that matched its own, unlike most of the other colocation centers the company researched. In addition, CyrusOne offers excellent disaster recovery protection, including a closed-loop water system that enables it to cool its systems even if city water becomes unavailable.

"At first I had some reservations considering that [CyrusOne] is in Houston, but I had a tour of the facility and saw they can completely seal off their building if they need to," Carll says. "During Hurricane Ike, they had little to no

damage to their actual building. That gives us a better feeling; in other words, we don't lose sleep because [CyrusOne is] based in Houston. Even during the storm, I still had connectivity."

Top-Notch Support

CyrusOne's IT staff offers top-notch hands-on support with fast turnaround times. "Any time I've actually had to use the hands-on support, I had to give them very little instructions to get the job done, which was great," says Carll. "I told them even which power cable to unplug to reboot something, and I didn't have to explain much beyond, 'This machine is down. Can you fix it?'"

Also, CyrusOne went out of its way to help out Carll and his staff when the initial shipment of Kaleidoscope hardware arrived at the facility. "I was stuck in the woodlands when we were getting that first shipment, and the shipping guys [escorted] the moving crew from the shipping loading center to the cage and had them unload it into the cage," says Carll. "I wasn't able to supervise at the moment, but [CyrusOne] picked up the slack on that. By the time I got there, everything was there and unpacked."

Carll believes CyrusOne is definitely the best space for Repsol to grow its system. "Even if it gets to a point, we can always make our racks a little bit taller so to speak, or we can optimize space that's already there."

The scalability that CyrusOne offers means Repsol does not have to worry about reconfiguring its data center when the company is ready to expand on Kaleidoscope's current dimensions. "CyrusOne is pretty much a clean slate whenever you need to move, grow, or set up new equipment. I don't think it will ever be a problem to grow there when we need to," Carll says. □

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"It was just a matter of less than a month of having our equipment and being able to have it live," says Daniel Carll, systems administrator at Repsol. "Most of the other data centers were probably going to be at least three to six months just for the buildout of the new power infrastructure that they would have to put in" to accommodate Repsol's Kaleidoscope supercomputer.

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Data Center Bodyguards

Software Security Solutions Protects SMEs With Its Layered Security Solutions

by Elizabeth Millard

• • •

THE ULTIMATE SECURITY GOAL for every data center manager is a layered strategy that incorporates an array of tools and services that thwart every virus, intruder, and thief. However, putting together multiple pieces—particularly if they're from several vendors—can quickly turn into an interoperability headache and can even end up reducing security levels instead of boosting them.

Software Security Solutions (www.softwaresecuritysolutions.com) aims to be true

Robertson explains, because limiting the amount of data to be bulletproofed will be better for security overall. Trying to protect absolutely everything, such as nonessential emails or unused VPN connections, can be daunting, so understanding what's worth protecting can go a long way toward building a stronger security strategy.

From there, the company can help apply the various layers of security, including data backup, disaster recovery, antimalware, email security, and wireless security. Last in the layering process are user education, application updates, and security policies.



to its company name, with offerings that solve interoperability hassles while providing a high level of security, particularly for small to midsized enterprises that tend to have special budget needs.

According to President and CEO Monte Robertson, there is no silver bullet when it comes to security. He notes, "We acknowledge that different users require different solutions, and different solutions are good at different things. We are always on the lookout for new threats and solutions because our customers simply can't."

Software Security Solutions even changes products when necessary, as threats, protection levels, and technology also shift quickly. It focuses mainly on home users and small to midsized enterprises and has a knack for providing affordable software that's also powerful.

Applying Layers In Stages

Although there are numerous security providers in the industry, from startups to behemoths, Software Security Solutions separates itself from the pack by offering layered solutions in five major areas: antivirus, data backup, security suites, safe surfing, and firewalls.

Robertson notes that there are key stages in applying layered security protection to an SME, and the company has put together a process to help its clients walk through each stage, beginning with a valuation of data.

It's imperative that SMEs get a grasp of what type of data they want to protect,

Software Security Solutions assists at every level, even those that don't involve software. For example, the company can help to implement an employee security training program and also boost overall awareness through a campaign it has developed to keep security at the forefront of user attention.

The campaign has a security tip of the day, for example, and also a security challenge that has a game-show type of format to keep employees engaged. There's

also a newsletter that can be customized, and companies can create a "security awareness peer group" that develops certain employees into security leaders for their departments.

Gaining Clarity

In addition to offering software solutions, Software Security Solutions examines different aspects of the layered security approach so that SMEs can gain value from recent research and insight about the field.

For example, one recent whitepaper from the company looked at how SMEs might choose antivirus software given the number of vendors in the security market. Software Security Solutions surveyed SME customers about various aspects of their antivirus use and attitudes toward products in order to determine whether "bloatware" products are costing companies money.

The resulting research isn't shy about issuing strong opinions. For instance, when

laying out the current state of the market, the whitepaper notes, "[I]t's somewhat depressing to realize that the software industry has been attempting to deal with the problem of viruses and other malware for almost 20 years now. Three vendors dominate this market, and all of them have been active in this business for almost all of those 20 years. . . . Some might say that's a sign that the big guys don't have a solution and it's time to look at some different choices."

The research goes on to offer helpful advice on choosing strong antivirus software, advising customers to look at performance, protection, and transparency.

"Finding all these attributes in a single product is difficult at best," the researchers write, "but there are steps both vendors and end users alike can take toward making it happen."

Geared For SMEs

Beyond budget considerations, SMEs are unique when it comes to security, Robertson believes. He notes that as attackers encounter more resistance in getting malware onto large systems and to mass audiences, they gravitate toward easier targets, such as SMEs.

On the whole, Robertson has found that SMEs tend to use reactive security techniques as they try to keep up with all the threats that bombard them on a regular basis. Implementing a layered strategy can help, but where SMEs sometimes stumble is in keeping all the applications and tools updated.

With so much tech support to provide and other upgrades, some SMEs may do security updates so that they're protected against the latest threats but neglect to update the software itself. Other applications might also be left vulnerable if extensive patching isn't employed, which means flaws in common software such as QuickBooks might be exploited by savvy attackers looking for those particular holes.

According to Robertson, Software Security Solutions helps SME customers because it's constantly watching any expansion of threats, but also because it offers products and advice that fall in line with a more proactive approach. Just as the old saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and in no IT realm does that ring more true than in layered security. □

Company Information



Company Name:
Software Security Solutions

Location:
Lakewood, Colo.

URL:
www.softwaresecuritysolutions.com

Date Company Founded:
2001

Interesting Fact:
In a Values statement posted on its Web site, Software Security Solutions says that its employees strive to honor God in everything they do by being quick to forgive; caring for everyone they contact; offering thanks for all they're given; and remaining fair, just, truthful, and honest.

IT Mergers & Acquisitions Off Sharply

Like other business activity, the rate of M&A (mergers and acquisitions) fell sharply in the last few months of 2008. However, the pace didn't slacken as much in the IT sector as it did in the rest of the business world, according to a new report from investment banking and venture capital firm Updata.

Since the credit market collapse and the recessionary slowdown, most companies have been too busy shoring up their own revenues to worry much about hot M&A prospects suddenly within reach. This is true across the board, but information technology is one sphere that is still relatively active.

IT deals last year fell 19% from 2007 levels to 820 transactions, with a 55% decrease in total value to \$76.8 billion, Updata says. HP's acquisition of outsourcing firm EDS and Oracle's purchase of BEA Systems were the year's headline acts.



Of course, more than 90% of those deals were struck in the first nine months of the year. Still, "we continue to see activity within the IT sector," says Ira Cohen, managing partner at Updata.

"We're actively working on approximately 30 engagements," he continues, noting that about 80% of the clients Updata represents are sellers rather than buyers. "So far in January, we've closed three transactions. That's probably on pace with [2008] so far, but we haven't yet seen a major IT transaction [this year]."

Two of those three transactions were in the pipeline for a number of months, Cohen says. However, the third, CA's rapid acquisition of Updata client Orchestrata, started in the inauspicious fourth quarter.

Looking Ahead

"Over the last year, we've experienced longer sell cycles" as nervous tech companies proceed more carefully with due diligence, Cohen says. This is, of course, in stark contrast to Bank of America's impulse buy of Merrill Lynch in the financial sector.

"I'm hopeful that at mid-year 2009, the pace will pick up," Cohen says, although large deals are unlikely. "We think most of the activity will be in the \$200 million and below [range]. There are some very good sectors that have higher revenues than the previous year, so we continue to generally be somewhat optimistic but cautious."

Specifically, Updata foresees relatively elevated M&A activity (including joint ventures and spinoffs) in the cloud computing, virtualization, and SaaS spaces, particularly involving government, health care, energy, and security entities.

"Those are good sectors," Cohen says. "We see activity in 2009 and beyond."

by Marty Sems

Bringing Technology To Furniture

Continued from Page 1

focus on the smaller details, such as the cable and power management options and where the grommets are placed on the cabinet. We are very conscious of what the buyer needs to run an efficient system, because we do not just look at it from a 'furniture' perspective. We know the technical aspects and understand the needs of technology-driven businesses," she explains.

Hergo's products are built to withstand the rigors of everyday office use. According to Cunningham, Hergo assumes that hundreds of people will use the structures for years to come, and as such, the company performs regular weight testing and

"We are very conscious of what the buyer needs to run an efficient system, because we do not just look at it from a 'furniture' perspective."

-Hergo's Lisa Cunningham

quality-assurance checks to ensure the products are solid and reliable. Further, all of its steel products are powder-coated, while its 19-inch mounting rails are zinc-plated. All of Hergo's steel products include a lifetime warranty against defects in materials and workmanship.

The company's open racking systems feature a wide range of interchangeable,

mounts that tilt/pivot and include fingertip adjustment.

In addition to high product quality, customer service is also a priority at Hergo. "The customer is always right," Cunningham says. "We never leave an issue unresolved. We don't just stop at the sale—the post-sale is just as critical if not more so. . . . Most people these days want their product

Data Center Industrialization

Continued from Page 1

and operate data centers. Unless these projects are done all the time, adds Crosby, they are simply too complex to do in-house.

In terms of economics, he says, the fact is these are extremely expensive projects, and builders and developers cannot tap into economies of scale unless they build a lot of data centers. "For entities constructing facilities on a three- to five-year timetable," he says, "these economic breakpoints are simply inaccessible."

Time to market is also an important driver, says Crosby, because more and more companies are mandating the consolidation of operations as quickly as possible. Only via the use of standardization, he adds, can facilities be completed within time frames measured in months, not years.

Finally, says Crosby, the rise of high-density computing and storage, energy usage and heat dissipation needs, and the increased cost of energy are all driving data center designers and constructors toward standardization simply because people are looking for proven best practices and want to do away with what Crosby calls older, more idiosyncratic approaches to data centers that made facilities so different from one another.

"Companies want a data center that works and runs efficiently," he adds, "and standardization is a more reliable path to a successful project."

Best Practices Come To The Forefront

A huge part of data center standardization is the identification and adoption of best practices that can help developers design and build efficient data centers consistently. Jody Cefola, manager of site and facilities services at IBM (www.ibm.com), points to TIA-942 (Telecommunications Infrastructure Standards for Data Centers) as an example of a standard that specifically addresses data center infrastructure.

According to Cefola, the standard is intended for use by data center designers and

focuses on site space and layout, cabling infrastructure, tiered reliability based on Uptime Institute Tier levels, and environmental considerations. Also, adds Cefola, the ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers) has published a Datacom series of best practices around equipment layout and data center temperature ranges that ensure energy-efficient data center operation while meeting hardware manufacturers' requirements for reliable operations.

Matt Kightlinger, director of solutions marketing for the Liebert Products business of Emerson Network Power (www.emerson.com), says some best practices that are becoming standardized include the use of optimized UPS building blocks that allow for scalability, hot aisle/cold aisle rack/row arrangement, increasing use of precision cooling that includes high-density cooling capability, and effective monitoring systems.

"From an industry-wide standpoint," says Digital Realty Trust's Crosby, "I would say that the concept of modularity is gaining more universal acceptance, but the implementation schemes tend to vary dramatically depending on the vendor." A potential pitfall to watch out for, adds Crosby, is vendors who claim modularity but then build out the entire electrical backplane for a facility and add their modular space after the fact. This, he adds, is extremely inefficient from a cost perspective since the power architecture comprises the bulk of build-out costs.

The Impact On The SME

Any trend that results in cost reductions is going to have a positive impact on small and medium-sized enterprises, which often don't have the capital dollars required to make sizable investments in data center development and build-out.

For example, says Robert Neave, CTO of GDCM (www.gdc.com), a data center management solution provider, even

yesterday. Because we control the manufacturing, we are able to prioritize customers on a need basis."

Those principles have helped Hergo to stock an impressive stable of customers, including Citibank, Verizon, Google, the Department of Defense, NASA, Harvard University, *The New York Times*, CBS, General Motors, and IBM.

Furniture In The Future

The challenging economy continues to place substantial burdens on IT companies of every size and scope, but the presence of computers remains. With those computers comes a need for placement and comfort, in turn giving Hergo a good chance to weather the rough storm.

"Unfortunately, the whole economy is downsizing. With the innovation of computers and increased technology, fewer systems and less manpower are needed. But computers are here to stay. Computer furniture is a vital need, and it certainly is not going away. Square footage is at a premium, so the need for vertical racking is stronger than ever, but budgets are tight. Therefore, we have to work harder to produce a cost-effective product/solution, but we are up to the task," Cunningham says.

In the future, Hergo plans to introduce additions to its lineup that include new and improved flat-panel monitor arms, motorized height-adjustable workstations, traditional desks, and technical work benches. The

company also plans to expand its mobile card product line.

"We will keep taking our customer feedback and offering what we know is needed," Cunningham says. "The economy is eventually going to turn around. The first-rate companies with the quality product solutions that persevere will be here when the budget constraints loosen and IT spending resumes. As has been the case for close to two decades, customers can depend on Hergo to be here when the smoke clears." **P**

Company Information



Company Name:
Hergo

Location:
Maspeth, N.Y.

URL:
www.hergo.com

Date Company Founded:
1991

Interesting Fact:
Despite having a highly detailed Web site, Hergo does not offer online purchasing. Instead, the company uses phone, email, and fax for one-on-one communication that can more accurately gauge customer needs.

says Bill Peldzus, vice president and competency lead of data centers at GlassHouse Technologies (www.glasshouse.com). These approaches, he adds, support many cost and "green" efficiencies when compared to traditional cooling and humidity approaches.

But, just because a method or approach is labeled a "best practice" doesn't necessarily make it so. John Consoli, CTO at AFCO Systems (www.afcosystems.com), says "the interesting thing about 'best practices' is that once they become widely adopted, they quickly become the de facto 'minimally acceptable standards' for our industry." Rarely, if ever, are these practices that have become standards questioned or re-evaluated, he adds.

Data Center Standardization Arrives

It's clear that data center standardization will be a boon for companies that need to undertake data center development and construction projects and can't afford to make mistakes that result in cost overruns and wasted time. Whenever best practices and approaches in an industry are codified and available to all, everyone from the largest enterprise to the smallest business reaps the benefits. **P**

Other Factors Driving Industry Toward Data Center Standardization

Ease of support staff training. John Consoli, CTO at AFCO Systems (www.afcosystems.com), says data centers based on a standard design allow companies to train support staff on a standardized template, so even when staff reductions occur, support staff can always know what to expect when they arrive at a site.

Build and pay as you go. Jody Cefola of IBM (www.ibm.com) says modular design allows companies to build data centers in modules, so businesses pay to build only for the capacity that is needed at the time. This way, additional modules can be easily added to meet changing needs.

No surprises. Shawn Ennis, CTO of Monolith Software (www.monolith-software.com), says

standardization allows businesses to increase productivity and reduce risk by providing predictability to data center design and construction. In other words, a standardized process yields few, if any, unpleasant surprises, such as cost overruns or design errors.

Green is good. Brian Strosser, vice president for enterprise data management at DLT Solutions (www.dlt.com), says green IT initiatives centered on reducing carbon footprints and saving power consumption are contributing to data center design and construction standardization. Approaches identified as best practices in terms of "green design" can be leveraged to ensure design and construction of eco-friendly data centers.

Netbook Shipments To Quadruple

Due to a "confluence of social and technological factors" creating a "perfect storm," industry analyst ABI Research is predicting netbook shipments to explode to 139 million units in 2013, up from the 35 million units that ABI expects will be shipped this year. One factor in ABI's growth projections is a realization among consumers that UMPCs (ultra-mobile PCs) and smartphones haven't delivered on meeting all of users' mobile expectations to date.



Enter the low-cost, battery-friendly netbook, or "mininotebook," used for performing basic wireless, Web-based tasks, including Web surfing, emailing, and instant messaging. Still, despite the netbook's popularity, detractors label the device as underpowered, one-dimensional, and lacking serious graphics ability and usually an optical drive. Critics also label netbooks as secondary devices incapable of replacing desktop PCs outright. A November 2008 survey from ABI, for example, found that just 11% of 1,000 U.S. adults surveyed indicated they'd use a netbook as a primary computer. In one ABI press release, principal analyst Philip Solis notes that although some consumers will inevitably view the devices as a notebook replacement, most people view netbooks as a secondary device.

Netbooks & The Enterprise

Given the netbook's deficiencies, do they have a future in the enterprise? That depends on who you ask. Gartner analyst Mika Kitigawa recently stated that because netbooks are "made cheaply to cut costs" and "most have Windows XP Home or Linux" and upgrading "to Windows XP costs more money," netbooks currently aren't an acceptable enterprise option. IDC analyst Bob O'Donnell, meanwhile, says that the enterprise's acceptance of netbooks is currently so small that IDC doesn't track the figure. IDC does believe 7% of netbooks are finding their way into small business settings, O'Donnell says.

Although current netbooks feature lower processing capabilities, less onboard RAM, and other low-end hardware specifications, ABI's Solis says that netbooks are entering the enterprise in small numbers via employees buying their own models and integrating them into work activities. Down the road, more varied screen sizes, touchscreens, and HD resolutions could propel further enterprise usage, Solis says. Additionally, as more enterprises move to cloud platforms, it's conceivable that netbooks will see more enterprise action as data center servers handle more resource-intensive tasks. Depending on the setting, Solis says, "you may not need a lot of power. You may just need to do Web-based tasks" or connect "through a company intranet," he says.

by Blaine Flamig

Storage Efficiency

Diskeeper's Storage Performance-Enhancing Software Makes A Big Difference

by Carmi Levy

• • •

IN THE RUSH TOWARD ever-faster processor speeds and previously unheard-of amounts of memory, the importance of storage to overall system performance is often forgotten. But Diskeeper, a maker of defragmentation and storage performance-enhancing software, believes storage should be given the attention it deserves.

"You've got CPU speeds getting faster all the time, as well as constant system memory growth," says Derek De Vette, vice president of public affairs at Diskeeper (www.diskeeper.com). "But the drive is still by far the slowest component in a PC or a server."

He continues, "Your computer is only as fast as its weakest link. Even if you have the fastest processor and you've maxed out your memory, if there's a bottleneck here, this is where you'll hurt the most."

System administrators have always understood how a fragmented drive can bring otherwise powerful hardware to its knees. Solutions that let them elegantly defragment systems without impacting day-to-day performance have long been Diskeeper's goal.

Easing System Managers' Pain

As administrators in small to midsized enterprises look for opportunities to streamline management processes and trim costs, they're increasingly digging into their systems management tools and processes. Although it seems like they're only now shining the spotlight on systems management best practices, this area has actually been a hotbed of innovation for decades.

"In 1986, we became the first company to introduce software that allowed defragmentation to be scheduled," says De Vette. "Before, the only way to defrag a computer was to do a backup and restore. You had to shut your computer down, back everything up to tapes, [and] then reload them."

Performance on the newly refreshed system, with now-contiguous files, would subsequently degrade with continued use, forcing weekly tape-based backup and restore operations.

"This was a big pain point," says De Vette. "It took a huge amount of effort and logistics to schedule operations like this, and it was very disruptive to the business."

Defragmentation software that could be automatically scheduled to defragment a drive without requiring manual tape shuffling was a game-changer. Scheduling, which De Vette describes as "miraculous, back in the day," took the market by storm and established Diskeeper as a dominant player.

The company's groundbreaking product, originally written for DEC computers, went even more mainstream in 1993 when Microsoft approached Diskeeper for help in building a similar solution for Windows NT.

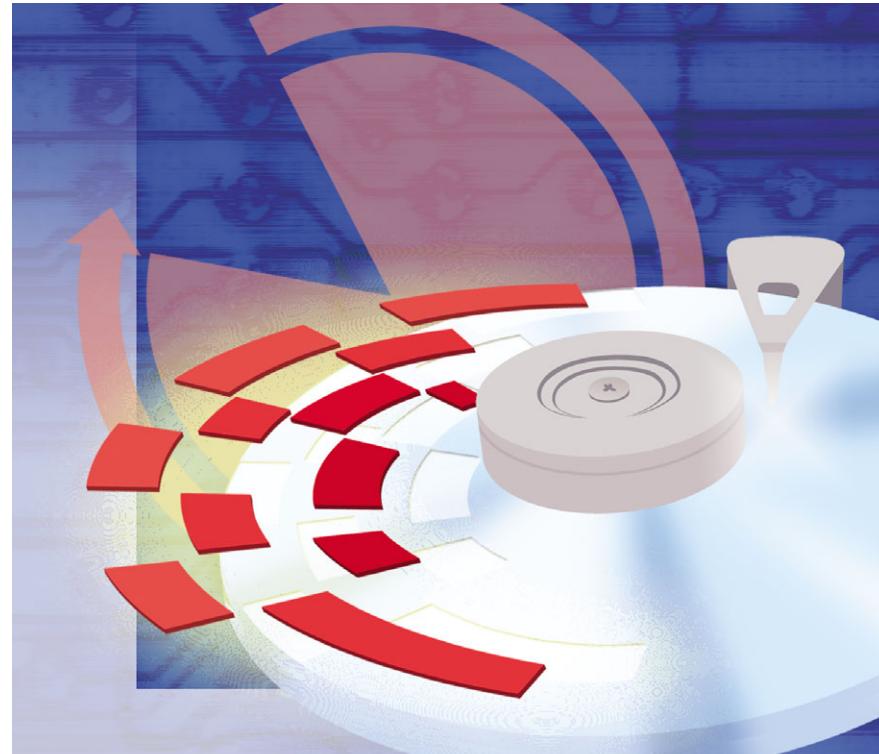
Although De Vette says many customers still think Diskeeper is included in every copy of Windows—it isn't—the company's early work with Microsoft solidified its position as a trusted third-party

provider. The firm has since sold more than 33 million copies of its defragmentation software and is actively investing in efforts to grow its relevance in an ever-changing technology landscape.

It's All About Overhead

System administrators understand the conundrum all too well: As effective as on-the-fly disk defragmentation can be, some solutions can sap system performance. In many cases, administrators, concerned about the impact to operations, turn off these services altogether. De Vette says this defeats the purpose and has inspired Diskeeper to find a better way.

Diskeeper's InvisiTasking technology allows the process to run in the back-



ground without dragging down system performance. It works by using idle resources that would otherwise remain unused. It means admins no longer need to turn off critical monitoring processes to maintain system performance. De Vette says the solution works so well that antivirus vendors are discussing how they can leverage the technology in their products, as well.

Beyond performance, SMEs also appreciate the additional reliability. "It gets rid of random crashes, slow boots, and reduced system performance," says De Vette. "It's basically the cheapest upgrade you can get. For someone who's never done a defrag, an antivirus scan could easily take half the time."

This resonates with companies whose help desks may be inundated with calls from end users frustrated by glacially slow desktops and laptops.

"Many of them are getting killed by fragmentation issues, especially when they're dealing with mission-critical devices like Web servers and file servers," says De Vette.

It also resonates with companies looking for a bit more green credibility. "It's not God's gift to green, but it's part of a larger portfolio of things that companies are trying to do to reduce power consumption," he says. "Disks not grinding overtime can certainly help that."

More Than Just Defragging Disks

Although Diskeeper has long been seen as a market leader in disk defragmentation software, the company's future is not exclusively tied to spinning disks.

"We've gone far beyond defragmentation," says De Vette. "We're seeing a number of new spaces where we're becoming very relevant," namely virtualization and SSDs (solid-state drives).

"A lot of CIOs are virtualizing their data centers to save on power consumption as well as hardware costs," says De Vette. "But it also means that that one disk drive is now working three to four times as much as it used to. So defragmentation slows to a crawl."

De Vette says virtualized systems are also twice as vulnerable to fragmentation at a logical level. To address this, Diskeeper has partnered with VMware and is the first vendor to be certified for Microsoft's Hyper-V.

SSDs are also changing the fundamental nature of Diskeeper's business. Although many industry watchers say these new drives are well on their way toward replacing traditional hard drive-based storage, De Vette says the new technology "has got a way to go. They suffer heavily on the write side, with an 80% performance degradation over a six-month period." Although SSDs are not vulnerable to the same kind of fragmentation that affects conventional spinning drives, they suffer from the reverse issue, often called free space fragmentation.

Diskeeper has developed an optimized solution, HyperFast, for SSDs, and has licensed with Taiwanese OEM vendor Apacer to build it into its next-generation drives. De Vette says the future growth of the company, which currently has between 200 and 250 employees worldwide and sells between \$40 million and \$45 million annually, depends heavily on OEM-based business, especially in Asia. This prompted the company to open an office in Hong Kong.

"[Asian-based OEMs] very much want to build partnerships," says De Vette. "Their margins are so razor-thin that anything you can do to help them have a competitive edge, they're interested in. Once they found the flaw in SSDs, they were interested in moving forward with us. This is cutting-edge right now." P

Company Information



Company Name:
Diskeeper

Location: Burbank, Calif., with offices in the UK and Hong Kong

URL:
www.diskeeper.com

Date Company Founded:
1981

Interesting Fact:
Antivirus vendors have expressed interest in applying Diskeeper's performance enhancement technologies to reduce system overhead associated with running resource-intensive monitoring processes.

Out With The Old

Recycle Your Media Helps SMEs Get Rid Of Their Outdated Storage Media

by Chris A. MacKinnon

UPGRADING TO THE LATEST and greatest storage technology can be a boon to your data center. But what should you do with your storage media now that you've acquired the most technologically advanced storage solution?

Although it's tempting to quickly dispose of your old media, Recycle Your Media (888/757-8273; www.recycleyourmedia.com), a storage media recycling firm that buys and sells tape media worldwide, says it is important to avoid the temptation and consider your social and environmental

to work for up to 1 million passes. However, every data tape that passes Recycle Your Media's certification process has not been used even a fraction of its projected lifetime. "With the growing amount of data [needing] to be stored," Musil says, "certified-for-reuse tape media is necessary to help reduce e-waste and, at the same time, [to] save money."

Musil says all IT professionals, including IT and data center managers, need to follow the forward-thinking data tape recycling culture. He comments, "As times change economically, it is good to know that you can recoup initial IT



responsibilities. Brian Musil, senior storage acquisitions manager at Newport Beach, Calif.-based Recycle Your Media, says this is because companies need to be following policies that recognize the holistic nature of economic, social, and environmental issues that all companies are facing.

Economically & Ecologically Responsible

Musil has specialized in secure data eradication and certifying tape media for reuse for more than seven years and recognizes the value in offering an economical solution, while providing an ecological alternative to shredding your tape media.

Recycle Your Media's service is a solution that is both economical and ecological for SMEs. Musil says the service the company provides is receiving a great deal of interest from IT and data center managers. Essentially, Recycle Your Media purchases your excess and end-of-life used data tape cartridges and securely eradicates the data for you. Musil notes, "Once the data has been completely eradicated, each tape is put through a rigorous visual and physical 12-point inspection. Tape media that pass the 12-point certification process are then repackaged and sold as an eco-friendly alternative to buying new tape media."

According to Musil, the manufacturers of tape media state that each tape is engineered

expenses and offset costs by purchasing certified-for-reuse tape media while [also] being a contributor of maintaining the health of the environment. Companies have a corporate responsibility to the environment, and this is a great opportunity for them to do their part."

Musil says Recycle Your Media is currently working on spreading awareness of its services and aiming to overcome any security concerns that companies might

have at this time. Musil comments, "It is known that other companies have lost data or simply resell the tape media to a third party without properly eradicating the data, and that has raised an obvious concern for the security of others. At Recycle Your Media, we are planning projects with corporations to implement recycling procedures as their standard operations, instead of shredding when their tape media

come to its end-of-life." Musil says Recycle Your Media has always had an interest in educating companies of the proper processes to be aware of in data tape acquisition and eradication.

Unique In Its Field

One of the things that makes Recycle Your Media stand out in a crowd is that the company competes mainly with companies that shred tape media. Musil says other companies provide a service that is not only

costly, but is also detrimental to the environment because the shredded remains end up in landfills. He elaborates, "We differ in that we pay companies for their excess and used tape cartridges and securely eradicate all confidential information. We will also arrange and pay all freight costs for you."

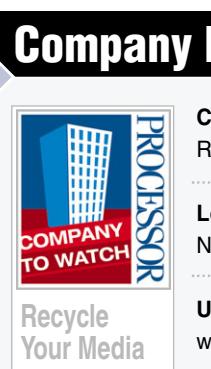
Musil adds that Recycle Your Media also differs from its competitors by the overall service and step-by-step follow-through, from the in-house audit to the certificate of data destruction after all data has been eradicated. "We stress that security is No. 1, and without taking the correct measures to protect customer data, they simply would not exist," Musil says.

In Musil's opinion, the company's certified-for-reuse tape media sets the standard so high that about 20% of the used media it brings in does not pass its 12-point inspection. The company brings in used media from corporations that have been handled and stored correctly in a data center environment. After the used media arrives at the facility, the product is completely eradicated of all data. After that, Musil says every tape is thoroughly inspected to see if it has been stored and handled correctly during transit. Recycle Your Media then takes things a step further with a cleaning process in which each tape is cleaned with chemicals.

According to Musil, another factor that makes his company different is its reputation and quality of product and service. "What's more," he notes, "Recycle Your Media offers an eco-friendly product, as well as an economically sound service and secure data eradication. We offer a certified-for-reuse product that is completely eradicated of all data and then goes through a rigorous visual and physical inspection process that is above and beyond what any other company has set as their standard."

Musil also points out the fact that the company offers a "no questions asked," 90-day money-back guarantee, as well as a lifetime warranty on all certified-for-reuse tape media. He says free samples are also provided upon request. Recycle Your Media also provides secure locked, armed, and alarmed transport to its facility. Musil says the company welcomes interested data center professionals to take a tour of the facility and will negotiate legal proposals to fit any company's needs and concerns.

Musil concludes, "With substantial growth in 2008 (a 50% increase since 2007), it is a clear indication that there is an increased awareness of the environmental climate and the struggling economy." □



Recycle
Your Media

Company Information

Company Name:
Recycle Your Media

Location:
Newport Beach, Calif.

URL:
www.recycleyourmedia.com

Date Company Founded:
2005

Interesting Fact:
Every master shipment from the company includes a prepaid product-shipping label. When customers return data cartridges, Recycle Your Media pays the postage.

Overall Mobile Market To Decline, But Smartphone Shipments To Increase

Stemming from the worldwide economic crisis, the mobile phone market as a whole is expected to see a downturn in shipments this year. However, decreases in price are leading consumers to shop for full-featured smartphones instead of traditional mobile phones; in fact, research firm IDC expects smartphone shipments to increase 8.9% worldwide this year. The firm predicts that gaming, mapping and location, entertainment, news, and social networking applications, coupled with the now competitive prices, will make smartphones an obvious choice for consumers over traditional mobile phones.

Gartner: 3G Speeds Don't Meet Customers' Expectations

A recent report by Gartner determined that the 3G networks of all four major U.S. wireless carriers deliver lower speeds than their customers expect. According to the report, average uplink and download speeds for AT&T, Verizon Wireless, Sprint Nextel, and T-Mobile 3G networks were between 300 and 700Kbps lower than expected. All of the carriers advertise their data transfer speeds as "broadband," which is generally defined as speeds faster than 1.5Mbps for downloads and 250Kbps for uploads, but the report points out that the carriers do not guarantee these speeds. Gartner's report concluded that consumers and companies should be more realistic in their expectations of network performance.

Smaller Browsers Continue To Gain On IE

In the ongoing tug-of-war for market share between Internet browsers, Microsoft's Internet Explorer continues to lose ground to Mozilla Firefox, Apple Safari, and Google Chrome, according to stats from Net Applications. Though IE still holds the vast majority of the market at 67.55%, that number is down from 75.47% in January 2008. Though both browsers are gaining ground on IE, Safari's growth outpaced that of Firefox for three consecutive months. Currently, Firefox has 21.53% of the Internet browser market cornered; Safari has 8.29%; Chrome stands at 1.12%; and Opera, Netscape, and a smattering of other browsers together hold less than 2% of the market.

Chip Makers Suffer Losses

According to the Semiconductor Industry Association, global semiconductor chip sales dropped 22% in December, down an additional 16.6% from November. The drop is particularly striking as the year-over-year drop from November 2007 to November 2008 was only 10%. Overall, global chip sales fell 2.8% for the year, which marks the first year-over-year decline since 2001. Affecting the decline is a simple matter of demand, as industries and products that carry chips are cutting back on manufacturing.

Global Internet Audience Passes 1 Billion

According to data from comScore, the total number of unique Internet users topped 1 billion in December 2008. The Asia-Pacific region accounted for 41% of visitors, and Europe was second with 28%. North America was third with 18%, while Latin America and the Middle East/Africa accounted for 7% and 5%, respectively. In terms of users by country, China topped the list, accounting for about 18%, and the United States was second with 16.2%. Of the more than 1 billion users, 777.9 million visited a Google Web site, 647.9 million logged on to a Microsoft page, and 562.6 million went to Yahoo! portals.

Used Equipment Without The Risks

Stallard Technologies Backs Up Its Preowned Servers & PCs With Warranties

by Bruce Gain

• • •

BUYING USED PCs, servers, storage devices, and other equipment can certainly save an enterprise substantial money. But although the savings might look good on a balance sheet, the risks associated with purchasing used equipment on the cheap are many.

Running a data center network is already enough of an ordeal without having to worry about when the next system will crash from component failure due to used equipment's extra years of wear and tear. Additionally, many fret over the risk of having to devote precious manpower to update BIOSes or system software on hundreds of aging machines in order to get

where Stallard Technologies (877/851-2260; www.stikc.com) enters the picture.

Balancing Savings & Risk

Stallard's mission is to offer significant cost savings to small to midsized enterprises seeking off-lease Dell PCs, servers, storage solutions, and components, with the added security of backing what it sells with warranties and guarantees. For example, Stallard Technologies offers a free one-year warranty with each system, which can be extended up to three years. It also offers onsite maintenance and repair services.

As an added quality standard, 99.9% of all equipment the company receives for resale is already fully functional, says



them up-to-speed for a modern enterprise's demands. Given these and other potential pitfalls, it's standard policy for some enterprises to never purchase used servers, workstations, storage devices, or components at all.

Bridging the gap between the cost-savings benefits and the risk factors associated with purchasing used equipment is

Phil Poje, chief marketing officer for Stallard Technologies.

"Everyone is looking for ways to lower their costs of IT infrastructure yet maintain the performance," Poje says. "Using [our] preowned equipment can save 40 to 60% over new equipment, and it demonstrates good corporate stewardship as it relates to the environment."

The Reliability Factor

Practically any firm can pay lip service to claims that it offers used off-lease equipment that poses few risks compared to new servers, workstations, storage devices, and other hardware. But in addition to backing what it sells with warranties, Stallard Technologies says it puts all hardware it receives through processes to ensure that it meets stringent quality standards prior to its resale.

When Dell servers, workstations, and storage systems are received, for example, Stallard says all processors, memory components, and hard drives are removed, tested, and inventoried. The hard drives' data is deleted using secure data removal technology, Poje says.

"Our Dell-certified technicians reconfigure the equipment to exact specifications and conduct a 20-point inspection of each unit," Poje says. "Our technicians thoroughly test and update the BIOS and firmware of all equipment before shipping."

The SME Niche

All too often, budget constraints slam the brakes on just getting the equipment an IT department really needs, and procuring high-end equipment, which could really boost an enterprise network's and data center's efficiency, is out of the question due to cost constraints. To help remedy this dilemma, Stallard Technologies aims to create buying opportunities for SMEs that would otherwise not be able to afford new and more expensive hardware.

"I see our equipment becoming more in demand within data centers as we give smaller and medium-sized companies the ability to create [data centers] and networks that they might not have been able to afford with new equipment and without the need for leases," says Ryan Conlan, operations manager at Stallard Technologies and a Dell Certified Systems Expert. "All of our hardware can run any of today's applications, so the need for the latest and greatest is not as prevalent. However, we still offer the latest Dell servers for networks that have those demands."

Mindsets are also evolving so that data center managers are beginning to rely on used equipment to do the heavy lifting required for new applications, Conlan says. For example, Stallard Technologies is increasingly selling equipment to buyers that seek servers with virtualization capabilities to reduce redundant server

capacity. "There is now an understanding that preowned equipment can handle the requirements of most business needs," Conlan says.

Stallard's range of offerings includes such high-end products as Dell rack-mount, blade, and tower servers; workstations; storage appliances and tape drives; and components, including CPUs, memory modules, hard drives, and graphics cards. The firm's high-end server line includes a 4x dual-core Xeon 3.4GHz Dell PowerEdge 6800 with 32GB of RAM. For workstations, Stallard Technologies offers a 2x 2.8GHz Xeon Dell Precision 670 with 2GB of RAM. Although the firm does offer entry-level Dell equipment, Stallard Technologies aims to keep pace with the industry by offering cutting-edge Dell hardware that remains very affordable compared to new versions of the equipment.

"With the arrival of solid-state drives, eight- or 16-core processors, and virtualization software, it will be very exciting to see what the industry will come up with next," Conlan says.

Growth By Word Of Mouth

Based in America's heartland in Overland Park, Kan., Stallard Technologies has seen significant growth locally from what Conlan calls an explosion of data centers. "Kansas City has become a welcome place for data centers with its lack of natural disasters," Conlan says. "We have seen numerous companies implement our hardware in local data centers, and that trend will only continue as the word gets out about us."

The firm is also geared to meet data center and enterprise computing demands for customers around the United States or overseas, as well as locally, Conlan says. "Currently, our production team is working on several large server and workstation orders. One includes filling a shipping container with six different Dell models so it can be shipped to Vietnam, where we hope to start a new business relationship within Asia," Conlan says. "Another is working with a local school district, supplying them with hundreds of workstations to be used in local schools." □

Company Information



Company Name:
Stallard Technologies

Location: Overland Park, Kan.

URL:
www.stikc.com

Date Company Founded:
2003

Interesting Fact:
Stallard claims it can replace defective parts faster than OEMs.

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• HP MSL 4048 (AG324A) Tape Library, 1xLTO3 FC Drive (NEW, w/HP warranty)	\$7,900
• HP MSL 6030 (AJ030A) Tape Library, 1xLTO4 FC Drive (Refurb chassis w/Magnext warranty, NEW Drive w/HP warranty)	\$14,500
• HP MSL 6060 (AJ031A) Tape Library, 2xLTO4 LVD SCSI Drives (Refurb chassis w/Magnext war, NEW Drive w/HP warranty)	\$21,600
• SUN StorageTek SL8500 Enterprise Tape Library, 12xLTO3 FC Drives, 1448 slots (NEW Drives w/warranty)	\$138,500
• HP VLS6518 Virtual Library (AG168A) 17.6 TB usable/compressed 2:1 (NEW w/warranty)	\$34,200
• HP VLS6870 Virtual Library (AG169A) 35.2 TB usable/compressed 2:1 (NEW w/warranty)	\$62,400
• HP LTO4 Tape Drive (AJ028A) SCSI (Excellent Upgrade for HP MSL 6000 series Library) (NEW w/warranty)	\$6,700
• SUN-STK 9940B FC Tape Drive (Refurbished w/Magnext warranty)	\$4,200
• MEDIA HP (C7973A) LTO3 Ultrium RW Data Cartridge, 400/800 GB (Brand-New/sealed)	\$31.10
• MEDIA HP (C7974A) LTO4 Ultrium RW Data Cartridge, 800 GB/1.6 TB (Brand-New/sealed)	\$56.65

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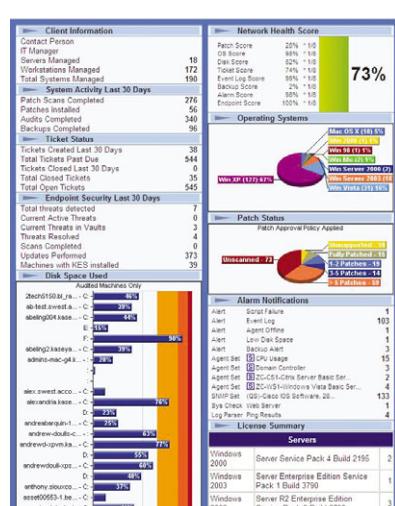
Kaseya Endpoint Security & Backup And Discovery Modules

In tough economic times, optimizing IT resources is crucial to business success. With automation, companies can deploy solutions quickly and efficiently. Kaseya's answer to these issues is in the latest versions of its KES (Kaseya Endpoint Security) and BU-DR (Backup and Disaster Recovery) modules. The new modules are designed to simplify remote IT automation with seamless endpoint security, instant virtualization, and real-time disaster recovery.

The two modules provide different functionality. The KES module, integrated at the user-interface level and the database level with all other parts of Kaseya's IT automation software suite, lets users automate IT management without sacrificing full visibility. Users can keep an eye on all deployment, configuration, status, and operations of end-point security from a single Web-based console. KES provides seamless operation and management of antivirus, antispyware, and rootkit protection for Microsoft OS-based servers, workstations, and mobile computers.

Features of the BU-DR module include Incremental Forever and Synthetic Full Backups as well as Instant Virtualization. The backup functionality is designed to offer efficient offsite replication and user-defined archival capabilities. Features of Instant Virtualization include the ability to remotely and automatically convert any backup to a

VMware, ESX, or Virtual PC virtual disk. To make the restoration process less painful and recover files and folders in real time, users can set up a virtual environment and quickly have a key system up and running.



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PRODUCT OF THE WEEK

Versatile Cooling Solutions

Data Aire's Ceiling Units Accommodate SMEs That Are Short On Space

by John Brandon

• • •

COOLING IN A DATA CENTER OFTEN involves a bit of trial, some error, and a lot of frustration. For smaller companies, part of the challenge is weeding through a lot of information meant for larger enterprises and determining how it fits their needs.

Data Aire, a cooling solutions provider based in California (www.dataaire.com), understands this dilemma. Its line of ceiling-mounted air-conditioning units is designed specifically for those companies that have smaller data centers but may not want to rely on existing air cooling.

Maximizing Available Space

In companies that have a server in a back closet or small computer room, there may not be enough room to install a full data center cooling product, yet the demands are just as high in terms of reliability and performance as they are for a company with a much larger data center. In such

scenarios, Data Aire believes its ceiling units are a perfect fit.

"Ceiling units have been around forever for all intents and purposes," says Jeff Trower, general sales manager for Data Aire. "Our smaller unit is 24 inches high. The height tends to be an important aspect because of the limited space available in ceiling-type environments. For smaller



units, at 24 inches it gets us into a lot of smaller and shorter ceiling spaces. The units are available in all of the typical methods of heat rejection, which includes chilled water, air-cooled, [and] water-cooled."

Trower says the main benefit for a small to midsized company is that a ceiling unit allows data center managers to control both cooling and humidity. They are also versatile enough to be used for cooling a variety of equipment, including server racks, networking gear, and storage areas. A ceiling unit can even be used at times for cooling the rooms where staff may be working.

Versatility Is Key

Data Aire's Ceiling Units can be used with a simple air plenum with a supply and return grille, or they can be ducted in just about any fashion in the office so that airflow goes out the side of the room, out the back, or up through the ceiling. The Ceiling Unit can be installed inside the room or outside.

"There is a big market for them in low-rise buildings, [such as in] office space for a small or medium-sized enterprise, where they might have a small room in a closet or back room," says Trower.

The midrange offering in the Ceiling line, called the DAPA-2.5, is a 2.5-ton unit that can be used for air-cooling, water-cooling, package or split, and indoor or outdoor condensing. One of the strengths of the DAPA-2.5 product is that it can be used in a variety of scenarios.

"If the SME is just one tenant in a multi-tenant building, they may not want to be

beholden to the building air-conditioning unit," says Trower. "If it is a chilled-water building and the office management wants to turn it off on weekends, and you are the only tenant on weekends, you don't have to compromise. You can even be submetered so you won't be charged for that floor unit."

Trower says he sees a lot of small and medium-sized enterprises relying on the Ceiling Unit line because of its flexibility in scaling to their needs. For example, he says many customers are in the health field—those with medical and diagnostic equipment such as MRI machines.

More Than Just Air Conditioning

One challenge Trower mentioned with the product is that it is sometimes perceived as not being that different from a standard air conditioner.

"Any room air conditioner or air handler might be perceived as the potential substitution, but that's where plenum versatility comes in," says Trower. "We have ductless split systems or window systems for small

the network itself—the additional level of sophistication is not something you find in room AC equipment."

Control, Scalability & Reliability

According to Trower, Data Aire offers software with its cooling units so that managers can gain precise control over the airflows and distribution in the data center. This is another distinguishing feature: With spot coolers or on-premise cooling, there is no way for managers to control features on the air-conditioning unit such as fan speed and temperature. Having these software controls available saves time, as the manager can remotely operate the unit from a console.

This added control, along with the flexibility of how the units are installed, gives Data Aire an edge over the competition. For SMEs, this means the flexibility to scale equipment as needed, and when more cooling is required, you can adjust fan speed and temperature accordingly. Trower says the customer base for the ceiling

Data Aire's ceiling-mounted air-conditioning units are designed specifically for those companies that have smaller data centers but may not want to rely on existing air cooling.

datacom closets. A computer room unit is designed for very specific attributes—primarily reliability, but also we address a higher heat ratio. A room air conditioner might have a 65% sensible heat ratio, but the only load in a computer room is the sensible load. Any dollars [spent] on latency load is a waste of energy budget. As an SME gets more concerned about reliability or energy use or controlling humidity, these products are more suited for a computer room."

Trower explains that the heat load is either from humans (latent heat) or from equipment in the room (sensible heat). The goal is to cool as much of the sensible heat as possible.

"Latent heat has moisture associated, but sensible heat is what computer equipment gives off," he says. "An air conditioner has the ability to address sensible and latent heat. The ability to control humidity means you have a humidifier and reheat capability in the unit. Another optional feature is the sophisticated capability to hook up to building management equipment or onto

mount units is growing because more and more data centers are cropping up in smaller offices, yet the desire for scale and reliability is still high. ■

Ceiling Unit Tech Specs

Here is a sampling of the Ceiling Units' technical specifications and highlights.

- Ball bearings rated for 100,000 hours
- Double inlet blower with belt drive and variable-pitch sheave
- Standard 18-month warranty
- Warranty extensions for 24 and 42 months
- Water control by two-way valve
- Standard 6kW reheat on 2.5- through 4-ton Mini-Plus units



PRODUCT OF THE WEEK

Data Aire Ceiling Units

Description: Ceiling-mounted air-conditioning units for smaller data centers that install in the ceiling out of the way, come with software to control temperature and fan speed, and can be used in offices where on-premise AC is throttled down at night and on weekends.

Interesting Fact: Data Aire Ceiling Units can be used both for room and spot cooling because of the way they are designed for installation and air control.

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CLIENTS

■ 3M Patient Record Tracking Solution



3M introduced the RFID-enabled Patient Record Tracking Solution, which helps hospital personnel quickly find patient records. A 3M database is linked to an RFID tag put on each patient record, and then the network of tracking pads is made for the hospital. Each pad is connected to a computer so hospital staff can quickly find patient records. The new program is also the only "plug-and-play" program currently on the market, according to 3M.

■ Confirmit Horizons

Confirmit unveiled Confirmit Horizons, which is an on-demand multichannel platform designed for feedback from customers, employees, and market research. This program helps organizations gain feedback from multiple sources, both offline and online, using telephone, Internet, paper, IVR, mobile, and other forms of data collection. Multichannel feedback such as Confirmit Horizons can increase participation in gathering feedback, and it boosts accuracy, as well as

customer and employee relations. Confirmit Horizons has new features, such as an Analyst role, which lets users perform ad hoc analysis, while incorporating a reporting application programming interface to produce information faster.

■ Parallels Business Automation 4.4

Parallels introduced the latest version of its Parallels Business Automation, a business support system ideally suited to the demands of service providers. Parallels Business Automation 4.4 lets users automate workflows, reseller management, marketing promotions, campaigns, billing, taxation, reporting, and fraud detection. Parallels Business Automation 4.4 also lets services distribute and automate SSL certificates for secure data exchange. Other new features include unlimited hierarchical support for resellers, sub-resellers, and customers; reporting functions; and the ability to use the end user's preferred language, currency, and payment methods.

■ Samsung ML-2855ND Laser Printer

Samsung released the network-ready ML-2855ND mono laser printer (\$357.99) for small and medium-sized enterprises. The printer offers a print speed of 30ppm and includes a 400MHz processor and 64MB memory (expandable to 192MB).



With such features as integrated duplex printing and Samsung's own TonerSave technology, the company says the ML-2855ND offers one of the lowest total cost of operation rates in its class. Printing at 50dBA, the printer has a 250-sheet cassette and 50-sheet multipurpose tray. An optional 250-sheet tray can bump up page capacity to 550 sheets. The ML-2855ND has a 50,000-page monthly duty cycle, first-print-out time of 8.5 seconds, two-line LCD, 1,200 x 1,200dpi (effective), and Windows 2000/XP/Vista compatibility.

MESSAGING & TELEPHONY

■ Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 Release 2

Microsoft announced Office Communications Server 2007 R2 (Release 2), which offers improved audio- and videoconferencing, new developer tools, and enhanced voice capabilities. Office Communications Server 2007 R2 integrates audio-, video-, and Web-conferencing; instant messaging; and email into a collaborative platform configured around the way people work. Office Communications Server allows customers to leverage existing Microsoft infrastructure and provide employees with affordable headsets for voice calling. Sprint is partnering with Microsoft on Office

Communications Server R2 to offer organizations Sprint SIP Trunking over Sprint's secure MPLS network, which enables businesses to connect their VoIP network directly to the PTSN.

■ Polycom QDX 6000



Polycom launched QDX 6000, a high-resolution, full-featured videoconferencing system capable of DVD-quality video at very low bandwidth. The Polycom QDX 6000 is designed for small and medium-sized enterprises and provides real-time face-to-face interaction and the ability to share movies, spreadsheets, presentations, images, and more. The Polycom QDX 6000 supports video at 30fps, high-definition stereo audio, multimedia content-sharing capabilities (H.239), and AES encryption. Another notable feature is Polycom's Lost Packet Recovery technology, which optimizes video quality over IP networks to guarantee quality performance even on a congested network. Polycom QDX 6000 starts at \$3,999.

NETWORKING & VPN

■ Acresso InstallAnywhere 2009

InstallAnywhere 2009 is the replacement for Acresso's InstallShield MultiPlatform. It's a cross-platform migration and installation authoring tool that can facilitate automatic customized rollouts on any operating

[Go to Page 14](#)



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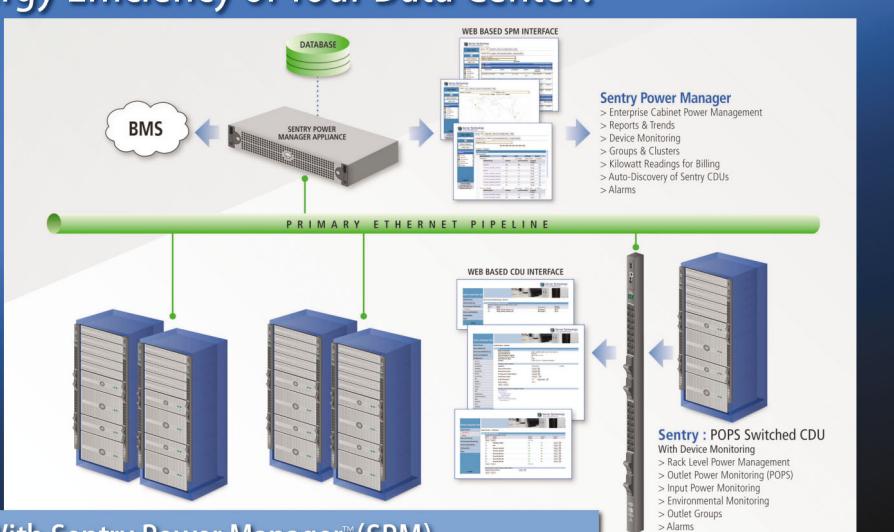
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Product Releases

Continued from Page 13

system supported by the payload software. InstallAnywhere 2009 allows better management of rule application across platforms and offers a new automation interface. It can discover existing JREs on target systems and use conditional logic during installations, too.

Digi International & Itron Smart Grid Applications



Digi International and Itron have joined to create a product that utilizes the OpenWay with Digi's ConnectPort X gateway and AMI (advanced metering infrastructure) network by Itron. Utilities can now utilize these technologies to remotely monitor and control DA (distribution automation) devices. This combination has the potential to cut costs related to equipment and operations. This lets utilities automate and manage a broad range of grid points. Additionally, reliability, efficiency, and security will all get a boost in regard to the electric grid, and it will justify AMI deployment.

Hifn Express DS 4100

Hifn announced the release of Express DS 4100, its NIC (network interface card). The Express DS 4100 uses Hifn's "bump in the wire" FlowThrough technology to address bandwidth optimization and security for in-transit data across local- and wide-area networks. The DS 4100 can reduce bandwidth costs by 50% and decrease replication and backup time. The Express DS 4100 package includes full Linux and Windows Server 2003 and 2008 software and driver support.

KACE KBOX Systems Management Appliance

KACE released the KBOX Systems Management Appliance. The appliance, which KACE says is the first to offer integrated security and systems management, now includes vulnerability assessment, remediation, and "best-of-breed" patch-management capabilities, all of which the company says lead to better protection and less exposure to security threats. New capabilities in this release include systems and security-policy management convergence to maximize end point security coverage; extended patch-management coverage for Windows, Mac OS, Microsoft and non-Microsoft applications, and antivirus updates; automated security configuration and policy enforcement for patch updates; and new remote office support. The release also includes patch- and vulnerability-management technology from Lumension.

Netuitive Behavior Analysis Engine

Netuitive announced that its Behavior Analysis Engine provides self-learning and predictive monitoring capabilities for failover and load-balancing. The Behavior Analysis Engine software uses automated mathematics and performance analysis that eliminate the need to manually set rules, scripts, and thresholds. And the software's granular visibility within the cluster allows it to proactively monitor the health and availability of the cluster as a whole. Netuitive software also correlates user experience monitoring data for a given service with the performance of its corresponding server cluster to automatically isolate problems. In addition, the Behavior Analysis Engine trends performance of the

cluster and will send forecasted alerts to operators before service levels are affected. Netuitive's cluster monitoring automatically recognizes and adapts to workload shifts during a failover.

Quest Software Spotlight On Oracle

Quest Software announced the newest version of Spotlight on Oracle for monitoring and diagnosing via desktop. Spotlight prepares database administrators for potential problems that could affect users, consumers, applications, and IT operations. Moreover, the predictive diagnostic features identify performance inconsistencies. Features include various types of archive locations, destination, and minimums. By using existing tools, Spotlight combats failure scenarios and monitors performance health. Spotlight on Oracle 6.0 is available starting at \$1,095 per CPU socket.

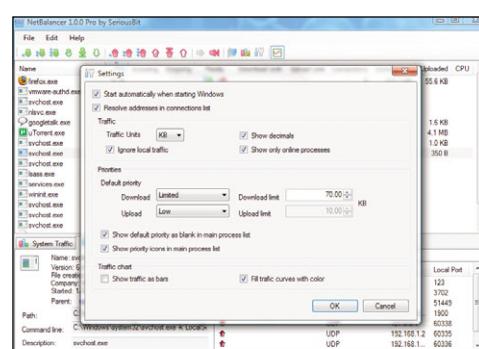
RAD Data Communications Megaplex-4100

RAD Data Communications unveiled the all-in-one modular Megaplex-4100 for MAP (Multiservice Access Platform). The Megaplex-4100 aggregates Ethernet and legacy services (over fiber and copper) via PSNs (packet switched networks). Further, it terminates traffic over transport media such as E1/T1, fiber, IDSL, SHDSL, and STM-1/OC-3 lines (utilizing virtual concatenation). Utilities in the transportation industry can migrate voice and data traffic to PSNs. Megaplex-4100 multiservice platform also creates SDH/SONET rights for transporting voice information.

RNA Networks RNA messenger

RNA Networks launched its MVP (Memory Virtualization Platform) and RNA messenger, the first software based on the MVP. Memory Virtualization decouples memory from the processor and server to produce high-performance computing from existing hardware. The RNA Memory Virtualization Platform is transparent to existing applications and operating systems to allow enterprises to leverage existing IT assets with no changes. RNA Networks' software improves the utilization of existing data center resources and provides a high-performance alternative to data center investments aimed at addressing the limitations of memory availability. RNA messenger is targeted at accelerating high-volume, low-latency applications or any business-critical environment that demands superior transaction processing speeds. Algorithmic trading, content delivery, and online gaming are areas that gain immediate benefit from RNA messenger.

SeriousBit NetBalancer 1.1



SeriousBit released NetBalancer 1.1, traffic-shaping software with features that let you browse the Internet while downloading large files. NetBalancer helps you monitor Internet traffic and set traffic-rate limits and network priorities for your applications. You can also set download and upload priorities for all of the applications you work with. Applications with a higher priority receive a larger bandwidth amount than those with a lower priority. When high-priority applications aren't using the network, NetBalancer does not limit low-priority applications. NetBalancer can also

Product Releases

SECURITY

■ **Absolute Software Computrace Wi-Fi Geolocation Tracking & Absolute Track**

Computrace® by Absolute® Software

Computrace, Absolute Software's tracking firmware for mobile computers, now includes Wi-Fi geolocation tracking abilities. Customers can now use GPS or Wi-Fi triangulation to track missing or stolen devices and view their location information through Google Maps. The Google Maps feeds are accessible by Absolute, its security plan subscribers, and law enforcement, resulting in a higher rate of stolen laptop and smartphone recovery. The new GPS and Wi-Fi technology is also included in the company's Absolute Track.

■ **Apani EpiForce 3.5**

Apani announced the availability of EpiForce 3.5, its newest security solution aimed at protecting virtual and physical networks. EpiForce 3.5 adds identity-based access control and encryption to create an identity-aware network that enforces security policy based on the identity of the connected user. With EpiForce 3.5, users can create logical security zones that control visibility and access to data based on user authentication, satisfy regulatory requirements by isolating sensitive data without reconfiguring the network, and secure legacy applications without requiring additional user intervention.

■ **Cloudmark CloudFilter**

CLOUDMARK®

Cloudmark announced CloudFilter, a cloud-based email security offering ideally suited to service providers and free Web-hosting providers. CloudFilter offers carrier-grade accuracy, infinite scalability to meet any capacity demands, and a branded and seamless experience for both Web-hosting and email services. CloudFilter also features Advanced Message Fingerprinting technology and real-time feedback from the Cloudmark Global Threat Network system. Pricing for Cloudmark's CloudFilter is available on a per-domain pricing basis.

■ **Courion Compliance Manager For SharePoint**

COURION®

Courion announced the availability of Compliance Manager for SharePoint, which discovers SharePoint sites and enables security personnel to verify that sites conform to security policies. With Compliance Manager for SharePoint, users can review highlighted lists of SharePoint sites that are not in compliance with security policies, examine questionable sites to identify users/groups with access rights that may not be appropriate for the site, and determine the appropriate action needed to remediate unsuitable access rights.

■ **Lighthouse Security Group Lighthouse Gateway**

Lighthouse Gateway, based on IBM's Tivoli, is a SaaS-based platform that provides identity and access management at

Lighthouse COMPUTER SERVICES, INC.

the corporate level, albeit at a low price. It supports identity and service provider federation, intrusion detection and prevention services and other perimeter security measures, high availability, and regulatory compliance. Lighthouse claims customers can save 30 to 60% over three years with its SaaS model, as compared to a purchased system.

■ **SafeNet XML Hardware Security Module**

SafeNet® The Foundation of Information Security

SafeNet released the XML HSM (hardware security module), a cryptographic security solution as a Web service for SOA. SafeNet's XML HSM is designed to reduce costs, streamline business processes, drive corporate agility, and meet regulatory compliance, the company says. The XML HSM reduces the vulnerabilities that SOAs create for sensitive data in legacy systems that weren't designed to be accessed by Web services. The service's encryption-based security seals confidential Web Services XML data exchanges in a protective envelope. HSMs provide an XML Web service security solution for high-performance encryption, digital signature, and key management services. SafeNet's XML HSM provides an XML programming interface that requires no knowledge of cryptographic APIs.

SERVICES

■ **3Tera AppLogic v2.4**

3Tera announced the release of version 2.4 of its AppLogic cloud computing platform. The new version supports both 32- and 64-bit virtual appliances that run data center operating systems such as Linux, Sun Solaris, Open Solaris, and Microsoft Windows Server. Version 2.4 also includes improvements to the user interface, new system dashboards, catalog application stacks in ready-to-run templates, and an appliance kit for the easy creation of new appliances. Other features include embeddable policy engine support and support for third-party licensed appliances.

■ **MapleWorks Technology Software Development Managers & Software Developers**

MapleWorks Technology launched Software Development Managers and Software Developers. These programs are designed to be reliable liaisons that accelerate a project's productivity and give real-time visibility throughout the project's development cycle. According to MapleWorks Technology, these services provide project assessment, architecture design specification, project management, development, integration, testing, documentation, customer training, and technical support. MapleWorks developers have experience in languages such as C/C++, JAVA, Perl, TCL, and XML; communication protocols such as DCOM, CORBA, and SOAP; data access protocols such as Wireless, L2 and L3, SNMP, and VPN; and platforms such as NT, Linux, Unix, and VXWorks.

STORAGE

■ **AppAssure Replay AppImage 3.0**

AppAssure introduced the next version of its application-protection software, Replay AppImage 3.0. It continuously images and

Go to Page 16



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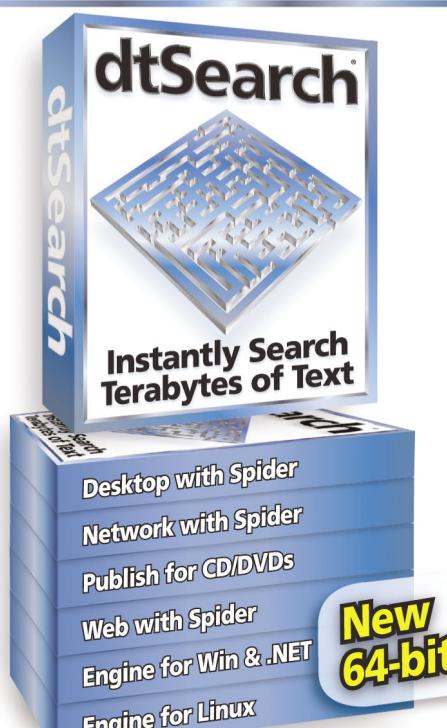
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Product Releases

Continued from Page 15

protects Windows applications such as SharePoint, SQL, and Exchange using off-host processing and provides live restore, live rollback, and virtual recovery capabilities. Pricing begins at \$899 a server. An application pack for Exchange with options for single-message restore and on-the-fly corruption detection is also available, starting at \$10 per mailbox.

■ Asempra Business Continuity Server 3.0

Asempra announced version 3.0 of Business Continuity Server, adding instant



recovery of real-time SQL databases, as well as many other new capabilities. It says that its Business Continuity Server 3.0 can now restore operations based on even a multiterabyte SQL database in as little as 30 seconds. The company's Virtual-On-Demand Recovery technology returns critical applications to working status while the full database is recovered in the background, eliminating downtime, data loss, and lost revenue.

■ i365 MetaLINCS E-Discovery Suite 5

i365 released the latest version of its MetaLINCS E-Discovery Suite, which lets



organizations catalog and search email, instant messages, documents, databases, and any other electronic data. Version 5 offers new capabilities, thanks to several

new features, including defensible Pin-point Search, Full-Function Review, and improved analytics. MetaLINCS E-Discovery Suite 5 is available for an annual or perpetual software license. First Pass Processing is available as a preloaded, easy-to-integrate appliance. The i365 E-Discovery secure hosting center also offers Full Suite or First Pass Processing capabilities to customers as a managed, hosted service.

■ Mimosa Systems NearPoint eDiscovery Application Suite



MIMOSA SYSTEMS™

Mimosa Systems announced the release of the NearPoint eDiscovery application suite for archiving, which includes features such as retention and classification, tiered storage, and file organization. Specifically, NearPoint speeds up eDiscovery through negotiating key phrases and reviewing queued information. Tiered storage enables enterprises to improve access to archived content by migrating it to high-speed equipment. The File System Archive allows users to recover stored data and rapidly identify search results. NearPoint eDiscovery is ideal for capturing content, as well as streamlining trial tactics. Furthermore, users can preserve archived data on servers, laptops, and desktops collectively.

■ NTP Software User-Driven Archiving

NTP Software released UDA (User-Driven Archiving), an application that

connects NTP Software QFS with Symantec Enterprise Vault. UDA allows end users to manually archive emails and files into Enterprise Vault based on individual selections or by selecting from a predefined set of criteria. This method enables companies to manage costs and mediate backups from primary storage to tiered storage.

■ Procedo Archive Migration Manager 3.0

Procedo released version 3.0 of its PAMM (Procedo Archive Migration Manager) utility, which it says is the industry's first "any-to-any" data archive migration tool supporting automated data movement among the industry's most popular storage, archive, and cloud computing platforms and apps. In addition to support for on-premise archive migration, this version supports on-premise migration of storage to a cloud platform. This version also includes a centralized management and reporting system that gives IT workers enhanced reports and analysis on migration jobs and when they're completed. Clustering abilities are included to reduce bottlenecks and cut points of failure during migration jobs, while optimization of email archive and WORM infrastructures are available through automatic data migration to more robust systems. PAMM 3.0 starts at \$5,000 per terabyte of migrated data.

■ Transcend 192GB 2.5-Inch SATA II SSD

Transcend released a new SATA II-interface 192GB high-speed 2.5-inch SSD based on NAND flash memory. Transcend says the drive includes a new controller and

offers sustained read/write speeds of up to 150MBps/90MBps, as well as 0.2ms latency. The drive also features ECC (Error Correction Code) technology built in for accurate data transfers. Integrated wear-leveling technology guarantees an ultra-long storage lifespan, Transcend claims, as well as long-term reliability. A two-year warranty is included with Transcend's 2.5-inch SSD drives, which are available in sizes of 8 to 192GB.

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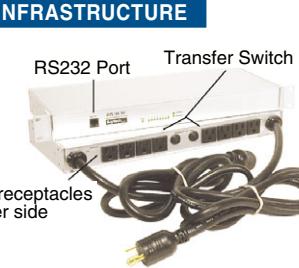
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Using Flash Drives To Boost Performance

The Advantages & Disadvantages Of Enterprise Flash SSDs

by Kurt Marko

• • •

SOLID-STATE STORAGE has long been the Holy Grail of computer design; the means of eliminating a system's last remaining mechanical components. Flash memory—an anachronistic moniker derived from the original reprogrammable ROM chips housed in transparent packaging and erased by exposing their memory cells to light—combines high density and non-volatility and has quickly become the standard for solid-state storage. Flash-based USB thumb drives and memory cards, now approaching \$1 per gigabyte, have already displaced CDs, leaving hard drives as the last vestige of servos and motors in PCs and servers. Flash has been prohibitively expensive for general-purpose storage; however, with prices plummeting in 2008, that changed, and solid-state drives

second while using 7W or less. Thus, to get throughput equivalent to a single flash drive, conventional storage systems must stripe 10 or more disks, using 20 or more times the power.

The cost of closing what Greg Goelz, vice president of marketing at Pliant Technology (www.plianttechnology.com), terms the I/O gap is one reason he feels SSDs are actually less expensive than magnetic disks for I/O-intensive transactional applications. "SSDs offer improvement not by increments, but by an order of magnitude in random transactional performance," says Ruth. He adds, "SSDs are capable of delivering 10 times or more transactional improvement over HDDs with no prospect that HDDs will be able to meet the challenge."

Lacking moving parts, SSDs are more durable than hard drives, but flash memory

SSD and upward of \$100 per gigabyte for products from boutique vendors. Of course, companies don't buy SSDs for archival purposes but for their impressive data throughput, and here Schulz suggests that a better metric is \$/IOPS or \$/IOPS/watt. While I/O is a harder measure to track, Goelz contends that on this basis, SSDs are actually orders of magnitude less expensive than a wide RAID stripe of fast hard drives.

Ruth says other major concerns about SSDs center on their nascent, evolving technology and immaturity. Although flash has been around for years, its use in enterprise storage systems is still new, and Ruth feels that until substantial numbers of systems are deployed, unexpected problems are bound to crop up. Real-world SSD issues include the efficacy of wear-leveling techniques, bottlenecks in controllers and I/O channels, and RAID performance.

Finally, Ruth and Schulz both note that the selection of SSD products is still rather sparse, with many small niche vendors. Both feel that to achieve their full potential, SSDs should be integrated as a fast tier within an overall storage system. Such systems could transparently automate the migration of static data onto slower, less expensive storage devices. "SSDs will highlight—rather, demand—the need to readress storage tiering and make it a hands-off feature within a storage infrastructure," says Ruth.

Enterprise flash drives offer the potential to significantly improve performance of I/O-bound applications such as transactional databases, business intelligence systems, directories, or, as Schulz puts it, "anything with lots of transactions with small, random I/O." Goelz sees the market for SSDs overlapping for the estimated 30 million high-performance hard drives sold last year. While SSDs' cost per bit will never compete with commodity SATA hard drives, their superior throughput means that for demanding applications, a single SSD can be cheaper, faster, and more efficient than a big array of screaming SAS or FC drives. □

"Modern high-performance storage subsystems have attempted to meet the performance demand by adding parallelism to mask the slow individual performance of an HDD. Combining many spindles, large caches, and multiple access points has been the tried-and-true method to meet performance demands."

- Burton Group's Gene Ruth

moved from dream to reality, with a new class of high-performance enterprise flash drives (so-called EFDs) that promise to permanently alter storage architectures.

Advantages Of Enterprise Flash SSDs

To understand SSDs' newfound appeal, even with prices that are 20 or more times higher than an equivalent hard drive, consider one of the biggest challenges for most applications: I/O throughput. "Storage vendors, basing their designs on mechanical disks, struggle to match transaction rate performance to that needed by two-, four-, and eight-way processor technology," says Gene Ruth, senior storage analyst for Burton Group Data Center Strategies. "Modern high-performance storage subsystems have attempted to meet the performance demand by adding parallelism to mask the slow individual performance of an HDD," he notes, adding, "Combining many spindles, large caches, and multiple access points has been the tried-and-true method to meet performance demands."

Yet this strategy is complex, costly, and often wasteful. Greg Schulz, principal at StorageIO, says that enterprises often over-configure storage systems to meet peak workloads. "This can and does result in environments that have storage utilization well below 50% of their useful storage capacity," he adds. All those superfluous spinning spindles are also sucking valuable data center power. Schulz notes that a typical high-performance SAS disk consumes about 15W and is capable of roughly 200 to 300 I/Os per second, while an SSD is capable of thousands of I/Os per

cells can wear out. Ruth notes that vendors of enterprise flash drives quote expected failure rates (MTBF), not accounting for usage, of 2 million hours, or roughly double that of enterprise hard drives. Yet he cautions that these are still just claims and, unlike the specs for disk drives, not verified by years of field-testing.

Of greater concern is the potential for flash memory cells to break down with use. Ruth notes that depending on the specific chip technology, vendors promise anywhere from 10,000 to 500,000 erase/write cycles. These are alarmingly low numbers because, as Ruth says, "In a normal compute environment, repeatedly writing to a memory location 500,000 times is possible in short order and would quickly spell the doom of a flash memory device." Enterprise SSD vendors are addressing the problem with a variety of "wear management" technologies such as write leveling, which spreads writes of the same data element across different memory cells.

Aside from wear management, Goelz says that enterprise SSDs include other performance-enhancing features, such as parallelizing writes across multiple flash memory blocks. As Ruth notes, "The efficiency and effectiveness of the write process is the secret sauce of an SSD vendor, hidden in intellectual property or trade secrets," and can result in wide performance difference among vendors.

Disadvantages

SSDs' cost per bit remains high, with typical 15,000rpm SAS drives running around \$2 to \$3 per gigabyte vs. \$20 to \$25 per gigabyte for Intel's new enterprise

Solid-State Showdown: Flash vs. DRAM

Flash isn't the only game in town when it comes to solid-state storage. Greg Schulz, principal at StorageIO, sums up the options:

- Flash is relatively low-cost and persistent memory that does not lose its content when the power is turned off. USB thumb drives or portable media players are the most familiar examples of flash storage devices.
- DDR/RAM is dynamic memory (such as that used in a PC) that is very fast but is not persistent; data is lost when power is removed. DDR/RAM is also more expensive than flash.
- Hybrid approaches make a complementary solution. These combine flash for persistence, higher capacity, and low cost with DDR/RAM for low latency and ultimate performance.

SOURCE: "ACHIEVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY USING FLASH SSD"; GREG SCHULZ, STORAGEIO; DECEMBER 2007.

Netbook Shipments Expected To Increase

ABI Research forecasts that worldwide shipments of netbooks will rise to 35 million this year and that by 2013, the shipments will rise to 139 million. The research firm indicates that the lightweight, portable mini-laptops are expected to grow in popularity because smaller mobile Internet devices and smartphones



don't currently deliver sufficient functionality to satisfy computer users on the road, although ABI notes that smartphones raised consumer's comfort level with mobile technology and showed them how well they could access information and data while traveling.

Satyam Seeks Possible Sale

Satyam, an Indian outsourcer riddled with problems since its CEO admitted to lying about its finances, has hired investment bankers Goldman Sachs and Avendus to help it investigate its options, and selling the company is reportedly one of those options. Satyam's board released a statement saying it wants the banks to help with "identification of strategic investors, obtaining expressions of interest, and ensuring a fair and transparent approach to the process." Satyam's problems began when Ramalinga Raju admitted to overstating Satyam's cash position by \$1 billion and overstating quarterly earnings by as much as 28%.

CA Defies Economic Trends

CA announced it is signing 18 software license deals reportedly worth more than \$10 million each, defying current downward economic trends. The

total value of the contracts, made in CA's third quarter, reached \$471 million, an increase from the 16 software license contracts the company made in the same quarter last year totaling \$303 million. CA's sales have declined 5% year-over-year to \$1.04 billion; however, according to CA CEO John Swainson, most of that decrease was caused by currency fluctuations that cut international operations revenue by 13%. Sales in North America were actually up about 1% in the quarter, and sales overall were level in constant currency.

↑ %

Intel Delays Shipment Of Quad-Core Itanium

Intel has postponed the launch of its server processor, dubbed Tukwila, in order to enhance its capabilities. The quad-core Itanium chip release will be pushed back several months so engineers can make such improvements as including support for DDR3 memory and adding a discrete "scalable memory buffer" to the platform. Additionally, the company plans to improve the motherboard socket not only for Tukwila but also for upcoming chips titled Poulsbo and Kitson. Intel is making this move to compete with IBM and its Power6 processor. Vendors, including HP, Fujitsu, Hitachi, and NEC, are complying with the delay to wait for the added features.

Is Your Antivirus Working?

Your Security Software Can't Afford Downtime

by George Crump

YOU HAVE INSTALLED the latest and greatest antivirus software, so your end points are safe and sound, right? There might be a problem. According to a recent Promisec (www.promisec.com) survey, more than 25% of enterprise users have disabled or deactivated the software on their laptops or servers. Also known as end points, these systems are an ideal way for your security to be breached and can lead to untold recovery expenses.

Users disable antivirus for many different reasons. They may get annoyed by the scanning or downloading of virus signatures. They may have been told to disable the antivirus agent by an application they are installing, and some applications have conflicts with antivirus agents. When users with good intentions plan to restart their antivirus agent manually "as they have time," their laptop/desktop is wide open to threats.

Users' lack of attention is in stark contrast to the increasing importance of protecting enterprise end points. Endpoint vulnerability reduction is at the top of most IT priorities as internal and external threats to an organization's data assets are at an all-time high. Jim Waggoner, director of product management for Endpoint Protection at Symantec (www.symantec.com), says, "Viruses and other security breaches are no longer created to play a prank; it is now about money."

These programs capture credit card, bank account, and Social Security information—the primary focus for the malware writers.

The challenge is the rate at which viruses are created, which requires a constant and proactive protection process. Even disabling an antivirus application for a few hours at a single end point can leave corporate data vulnerable.

The Starting Point

At a minimum, your antivirus application needs to be installed and updated frequently. New threats arrive on a daily basis, and missing these updates can be dangerous. Second, SMEs with limited IT resources need antivirus applications to manage and automate as much as possible.

"Installation of the software isn't enough," says Waggoner. "That must be followed with a console that can make sure your antivirus software is active and up-to-date and if it is not, can alert you to that condition."

Most antivirus application agents will perform periodic updates to ensure that it has the latest version of virus signatures. Far fewer will report that back to a centralized console. Fewer still will do more than alert you to the problem, which, when managing potentially hundreds, if not thousands, of end points, is a problem. The busy IT professional has too many other irons in the fire to be constantly checking his antivirus status screen.

Antivirus solutions need to take care of things on their own and let you know that they did. "An important capability for your antivirus solution is to make sure it has some

form of automatic remediation," continues Waggoner. "Automatic remediation is more than just the ability of an antivirus application to restart itself if a user cancels the application. It is also the ability to reinstall and reload the application if the user deletes it."

The Third-Party Audit

The top priority of verifying that your antivirus is working, according to Promisec's VP of Marketing, Alan Komet, is to have a console in place that will report on the status of antivirus protection. "The challenge with built-in consoles from antivirus software developers is that they only detect their software," he says, "and often even that reporting is inaccurate, reporting working agents that are not actually working."

"There are even cases where users have disabled the antivirus software and then the laptop becomes infected by a virus that targets the antivirus application itself. What is needed is a third-party tool that can provide an independent validation that the antivirus software is installed, active, and up-to-date."

Additionally, these consoles should advise on other security threats, such as missing service packs, unauthorized removable storage, and unauthorized peer-to-peer applications, such as personal VoIP software or instant-messaging applications.

These applications need to examine the current state of a machine but also remember its recent configurations. For example, in the case of unauthorized removable storage, the console software will have to work forensically to diagnose a device that was attached in the past, even if it is not present at the time of the scan.

Protecting shares is also critical. The next time you have a layover, go to an airport lounge and see how many hard drives you can access on the wireless network. The results can be alarming, especially when you consider that some of these may be your users.

"It is also important to have the console software agentless," Komet says. "In many cases, agents in and of themselves create security holes or require special provisions in your firewall and security measures."

Protecting your end points from viruses and other threats is a big challenge. They are often mobile and out of the control of IT. Proactive auditing and monitoring is required to make sure that an end point doesn't become compromised and, more importantly, doesn't spread that contamination to the corporate data assets. □

Where Enterprises Are Vulnerable

Promisec (www.promisec.com) recently surveyed enterprises over a six-month period to determine the number of end points with particular vulnerabilities. Although the survey found several security concerns, such as missing service packs and unauthorized use of instant-messaging apps, the lack of or disabled antivirus software was the most common. Almost 28% of the end points in the survey had no active antivirus software.

Number	Percentage
3,159	2.87%
24,956	22.69%
30,662	27.88%
14,091	12.81%
6,120	5.57%
5,163	4.69%
26,095	23.73%
Total	109,973
	100%

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Alcatel-Lucent Reports Eighth Straight Loss

Paris-based Alcatel-Lucent posted its eighth consecutive quarterly loss, citing a deficit of about \$5 billion in Q4 2008. Although the company's shares lost 43% in Q4 and have fallen another 4% so far this year, CEO Ben Verwaayen remains positive, saying the company has plans in place to improve its standing in the future. Multiple management changes occurred in 2008, but Verwaayen indicates that the company does not anticipate new acquisitions in the near future.



Motorola Reports Drastic Q4 Losses

Employee layoffs, the exit of its CFO, and the suspension of quarterly cash dividends are among the fallout at Motorola following a dismal Q4 2008 performance that saw the company experience a net loss of about \$3.6 billion, or about \$1.57 per share, down from the \$100 million it earned during Q4 2007. Motorola reported \$7.1 billion in revenue for Q4 2008, down about 26% year-over-year from \$9.6 billion, and claimed a 6.5% stake of the mobile handset market for the quarter based on 19 million handsets shipped, down about 50% year-over-year. For all of 2008, Motorola took a net loss of about \$4.2 billion. The beleaguered mobile device company announced plans of 4,000 employee layoffs last month, on top of 3,000 job cuts announced in October 2008. Additionally, Edward Fitzpatrick, senior vice president and corporate controller, will take over as CFO following Paul Liska's recent resignation.

SanDisk Reports Q4 Loss, Sells 20% Of Production Capacity To Toshiba

Flash memory maker SanDisk reported a net loss of \$1.86 billion, or \$8.25 per share, for Q4 2008, down from about \$106 million in Q4 2007. The Q4 2008 total represents the third straight quarter SanDisk has posted a loss. For the quarter, SanDisk's revenue dropped about 31% year-over-year to about \$864 million but still beat Wall Street's projection of \$766.8 million in revenue. For fiscal 2008, SanDisk's total revenue was \$3.35 billion, down 14% from \$3.9 billion for 2007. Additionally, SanDisk announced a \$1.02 billion write-down of assets and the possibility of raising up to \$500 million in 2009 through the sale of shares. Late last month, the company also announced it will sell 20% of the production capacity in its joint flash-memory venture to partner Toshiba for about \$890 million.

Re-evaluate Your Service Provider Relationships

Cut Costs With New Contracts

by Sue Hildreth

IT'S THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR and a good time to review your service contracts and relationships. A yearly re-evaluation of your contracts not only ensures that you're getting the best price possible, but also that the specific services and level of service are meeting your expectations. You may want to re-evaluate a relationship before the end of the contract if it's a new provider or if you're not entirely satisfied with the results you're getting.

In today's depressed economy, it's become much more common to ask for, and get, some type of discount on new or existing services contracts. The amount of the discount varies greatly, says Christine Tenneson, research director for Gartner's Managed and Professional Network Services group. Even services that typically have not been discounted—such as professional consulting services—are now fair game for negotiation.

"You didn't used to see much discounting on hourly or daily rates, but now I'm seeing 20 and 22% discounts on professional services," says Tenneson. But even a more modest discount can mean a big savings in the final bill on a large contract.

"For customers who are paying list price, even moving to a 10% discount is worth the time it takes to renegotiate," says Tenneson.

While it's usual to renegotiate a contract when it is up for renewal, you can ask to renegotiate before then if you have a good reason. Helen Huntley, vice president at Gartner Research, says that approximately 50% of contracts are re-evaluated before the end of the contract. Reasons to do mid-term correction include a merger or acquisition, a major change in the customer's business model, an inadequate level of service from the provider, or a faster-than-expected growth requiring an expansion of the contracted services.

Likewise, a slow-down in the business may also be cause for re-negotiation. Even if you don't have a major business change that you can give as a reason, you can still ask to

rework a contract if the market has changed drastically and the price you're paying is much higher than the going rates.

"If I have a fixed price, 10-year contract for data center services, you know that the cost of delivering those services has gone down. So I would go back to the vendor and show them the price I'm paying vs. the cost," she says.

Trimming Services Can Net Bigger Returns

At the same time as you're attempting to cut down your provider's prices, you may also want to take a second look at which services in your contract could be sacrificed for the sake of a bigger discount. Support and maintenance services, for instance, are ones that many customers attempt to cut back on in tough times.

"Cutting maintenance costs is where a lot of people see the easy money savings right now," says Tenneson.

For instance, an IT manager might decide that his organization can do without a 24/7 support contract for the data center and opt to cut it back to 5 days by 8 hours. But that cut-back could wind up being a loss for the company if that around-the-clock technical support is critical to the enterprise's operations.

If you demand an overall price cut, be aware that the service provider may need to trim services to justify the lower price—and may cut into services that are critical to your organization. Or the provider may have to downgrade the quality of a service or offshore services that had previously been done in-house. So stipulate which services you still expect to receive, at what levels, to avoid an unpleasant surprise.

"Too much focusing on the cost, without focusing on the needs of the business, is very myopic thinking," says Huntley.

Besides cutting less necessary services, you may also want to consider cutting services that you can conceivably provide yourself. Huntley suggests looking at areas where you have in-house expertise to see if your own employees can handle the extra work.

Redo Due Diligence

While you're paring the costs and negotiating price, it's a good idea to see how well your providers are meeting their SLAs and

What To Ask Your SaaS Provider

Liz Herbert, an analyst with Forrester Research, says clients should be careful to inquire about five key areas when negotiating their SaaS contracts.

- **Data ownership.** What fees, if any, do you have to pay to get your data back at the end of the relationship?

- **Uptime and performance.** What does the SLA specify in terms of uptime? A weak guarantee that is all too common is 99.5% uptime outside of planned maintenance windows. That could mean a lot of downtime.

- **Backup and recovery.** What is their plan for a disaster? What are they obligated, and not obligated, to do in the contract?

- **Support.** How is technical support spelled out in the contract?

- **The endgame.** What exit clauses exist to get you out of a bad deal, and what renewal guarantees do you have at the end of the contract's term? Is there protection against large rate increases upon renewal?

consider whether you want to ask for a better SLA in lieu of a discount.

"Service levels often have been weak or missing," says Herbert, who covers SaaS providers. "As SaaS moves into more critical areas, and vendors have to be more competitive, we'll see more vendors offering 99.9% and getting more aggressive about what they're offering in their SLA."

Likewise, critical issues such as security and disaster recovery should be re-evaluated to see if the vendor is keeping up with technical developments in the industry and investing in its own infrastructure—not just struggling to survive. If you have a SaaS provider who relies on a hosting company to deliver its software, ask how long they've been using that provider and how much notice they will give you if they decide to switch to a different hosting firm.

Do get the legal people involved. Liz Herbert of Forrester notes that, although many business and IT managers may be reluctant to bring in a legal team, it's a good idea to do so.

"They have the expertise and know what needs to be in the contract," says Herbert. "Often a department may think it can get a deal done more quickly if they do it themselves. But in a lot of cases, they run into trouble down the road. Something comes up in the contract that they didn't expect, or there's an integration they want that doesn't work right."

Involve the legal team and your company's sourcing or procurement department to ensure that contracts will be stored in a central location and that they will follow a consistent set of best practices that reflect your organization's needs instead of always using the vendors' contracts and SLAs.

Finally, remember that re-evaluating contracts and provider relationships is a common part of business life. Your provider should have no problems talking to you about decreasing costs or beefing up services you may need. It doesn't mean you're planning to jump ship on them. Gartner's Huntley notes that 85% of deals that are renegotiated are renewed with the same provider, but presumably at a better price to the customer.

"Most vendors are expecting to negotiate around pricing," says Tenneson. "Especially in this economy." □

Job Search Site Security Breach

Following its second breach in 18 months, online job search giant Monster.com posted a security notification on its Web site alerting users to the recent theft of a variety of user account details. The notification, titled "Monster Database Security Breach Official Alert," reports that the stolen data consists of user IDs, passwords, email addresses, names, phone numbers, states of residence, dates of birth, and gender and ethnicity data. Because some of the stolen data might be used to institute a phishing scam, Monster opted to notify all users via the Web posting rather than email customers whose information is known to have been compromised. The company has also declined to name the total number of affected users.



Since the incident, Monster has taken corrective measures to ensure no further information is compromised and is currently working with the authorities to apprehend the perpetrators. As of Jan. 28, when any potentially affected users attempt to log in, Monster.com notifies them that they need to reset their passwords before they can access the accounts.

Other Web Accounts At Risk

Although no Social Security numbers or banking information was said to have been compromised, security experts agree that the Monster.com breach, and others like it, put users' other Web accounts at serious risk of breach. IT security company Sophos claims that as many as 41% of those online use the same password for every Web site they access. For these users, a breach like the one at Monster compromises their identities, as well as their banking, email, and countless other sites. McAfee security specialist Joris Evers also offers this advice: "If you use the same password for a lot of different Web sites, now is a smart time to change it. The best thing to do is use a different password and username for every site." Users can purchase software to help manage passwords or, "if you want to go low-tech, you could write your passwords down on a piece of paper and keep it in your wallet."

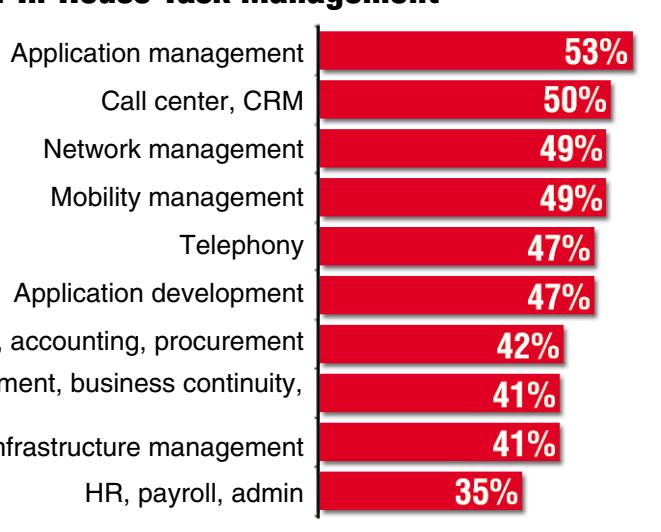
To anyone who thinks her data may have been stolen, Evers recommends keeping tabs on your identity by subscribing to identity-theft monitoring services. When asked what else users can do to protect their identity, Evers recommended users only submit necessary information to Web sites. "If you're looking for a job, you don't have to put your home address, telephone number, date of birth, or Social Security number on the résumé."

by Andrew Leibman

Outsourced Contracts Come Back Home

Many enterprises are bringing processes back in-house that they used to contract to outside sources. Application management, network management, and mobility management are just three of the more popular processes that many companies are choosing to handle in-house.

From Outsourcing to Insourcing: SMBs Reconsider In-House Task Management



Percent of SMBs that Brought Outsourcing Contracts Back In-House

(SOURCE: ANYWHERE ENTERPRISE)

How To

Secure Mobile Data

Protecting Data Is A Challenge On Numerous Levels

by Sandra Kay Miller

ORGANIZATIONS THAT WANT TO INCREASE their mobility are at a crossroads. Despite a mature and rapidly expanding mobile device market, the risks associated are also growing. At the International Consumer Electronics Show in January, Tim Herbert, senior director of research for the Consumer Electronics Association (www.ce.org), estimated that mobile phone sales would top 1.2 billion units sold worldwide in 2009. At the Gartner IT Security Summit a few months prior to Herbert's prediction, analyst John Girard warned that as mobile devices become more PC-like and standardized, they will be more at risk from hackers or phishing and malware attacks.

Throughout the enterprise, agility and mobility have been rewarded with growing revenue. Companies are turning to cutting-edge mobile business solutions, such as Web-based enterprise apps, cloud computing, and Wi-Fi-enabled smartphones and netbooks, to make their enterprises cost-efficient.

Focus On The Endpoint

Early mobile security options, such as VPN and SSL, extended protection to the link between private networks and endpoint mobile devices, but it wasn't long before companies realized that a secure channel didn't do much good for the stolen laptop with proprietary information or a lost PDA with customer contacts. Further exacerbating the need for a different security model was the growing capacity of mobile media storage devices. Enterprises are no longer worrying about employees downloading

illegal music tracks using the corporate network; rather, the new challenge is preventing intellectual property from ending up on an 80GB iPod and walking out the door.

We live and do business in a Web 2.0 world. Company execs and representatives are posting to blogs from iPhones as a way of communicating with their customers. Road warriors make do with their RIM BlackBerrys, PDAs, and flash drives instead of lugging around their laptops. "One of the challenges with mobile security is to really lock things down without affecting the usability of the device. You've got to find a balance so that users are able to do their jobs while being secured," says Sheila Droski, director of product management at Credant Technologies (www.credant.com).

Shelby Day, product manager for PGP Endpoint (www.pgp.com), says, "Security has evolved a lot over the last few years. We need to protect data on mobile devices as it moves through the network and while it's at rest."

The trend has been to focus on the endpoint—not with a single methodology but a variety of technologies, which include centrally managed encryption, port control, authentication, and auditing. "Removable storage devices present a growing security risk for mobile data. Organizations need a way to automatically mitigate the risk," explains Day.

Getting Started

Before embarking on a comprehensive plan for securing mobile data, it's important to identify the need for protection. Andy Kicklighter, director of product marketing for

GuardianEdge Technologies (www.guardianedge.com), says there are basically three reasons why companies need to secure their mobile data.

The first reason Kicklighter gives is to ensure protection from financial costs related to data loss. "Depending on which analyst you listen to, the cost can be \$100 to \$300 per record lost."

The second reason is regulatory compliance. "If you are in insurance or finance or healthcare, you have a strong set of laws to which you need to comply, including HIPAA, SOX, [and] GLBA," he says.

The third reason is to protect valuable data such as intellectual property. "Losing information can present a serious risk to your business or even your safety, especially if you are a government or defense installation," says Kicklighter.

Popular Strategies

Although many organizations have long regarded the price of IT security as an expense, anyone who has been subjected to data loss, whether by theft or inadvertent loss, understands that mobile data protection is well worth the cost.

Many companies are turning to centrally managed enterprise endpoint security solutions. These products are competitively priced on a per-seat basis, with many costing less than \$100 per user annually. The products deliver an assortment of security functions, including device and port control, encryption, data shadowing, auditing, logging, device discovery, and file and application access control. Practically all solutions on the market integrate with existing directory services, translating into rapid enterprise-wide deployments. Granular policy controls let administrators determine how stringent security needs should be for particular users, devices, and data.

On a different front, security is being employed at the application layer to protect mobile information. Application firewall technologies are rapidly gaining in popularity, especially among companies bound by PCI DSS compliance. Some of these products provide the capability to tag particular information and track its movement throughout a network. Others specifically protect information housed in databases. These solutions are typically appliance- or server software-based products. Appliances often include additional network- and data flow-related functionalities that can add to the price tag.

Although these two categories of technologies secure mobile data on disparate devices

Key Points

Securing mobile data has a multifaceted approach. Although mobile devices suggest the movement of data, users must understand that they are really portable storage devices and must be treated as such. To meet the growing need of mobile data security, organizations are turning to encryption technologies, which are available for a variety of platforms and devices.

and platforms, many organizations admit they continue to secure data on mobile devices through basic user access control via password. Although this method fails to provide the level of protection device control and firewalls offer, it's still better than nothing.

Multiple Advantages

Not only do many of the mobile data protection technologies prevent data theft or loss, they also deliver protection against malware. Although a lot of antivirus products rely on signature-based technologies that require regular updates to ensure protection, the next generation of security products—for mobile devices and desktops—relies on authentication and access control through existing directory services. This means that deployment, configuration, and administration are greatly reduced, as IT staff will be working with familiar systems.

Through granular centralized interfaces that communicate with lightweight clients and agents installed on endpoints, administrators are able to determine what rights users have with their mobile devices without impeding productivity or personal use.

Once reserved for government use, encryption has become routine in the security of mobile data. "Encryption on mobile devices today has become completely automated and transparent to the end user," says Day. After the widely publicized missing Veterans Affairs laptop in 2006, the one that contained millions of personal records, the VA deployed an automated encryption solution that encompassed mobile devices on which private information was stored. However, last year when a VA employee had his laptop stolen from his apartment, it barely warranted a blip on newscasters' radars because all of the information on the hard drive was automatically encrypted. Without the proper credentials, an unauthorized user could not access any data on the device.

By integrating technologies that cover several security bases, endpoint security solution providers have finally begun to nail down efficient ways to protect mobile data. P

TOP TIPS

- Know what data is important.** There is a price attached to securing information. Enterprises need to identify what information they need to protect to wisely allocate security resources.
- Identify users with access to critical data.** Not everyone in a company has access to sensitive information.
- Knowing which employees store confidential data on their mobile devices lets you target security efforts.
- Create a written policy regarding mobile data security.** Doing so ensures everyone is aware of expectations regarding data security and also results in the uniformity

of enforcement in the event of a security breach.

- Employ technology solutions to enforce the written policy.** Today, there are a variety of software and hardware mobile data security options available to meet the specific needs of each organization.

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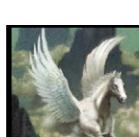
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Find The Best IT Talent Available

Tips For Getting The Right People For Your SME

by David Geer

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"DURING A RECESSION, PEOPLE [the general populous] say no one is working, everybody is getting laid off. But the best people are still working. They are not affected. So, companies who want to grab the best talent have to separate themselves from the crowd. They have to be cool, have the newest technologies, and offer a great employee quality of life," says Crystal Taylor, staffing consultant for Hollister's Technology Division (www.hollisterstaff.com).

With this understanding, it becomes clear that finding the best IT talent is not a simple matter of locating qualified prospects. It is more of a mating ritual. Just because a small to midsized enterprise has eyed the perfect hire does not mean the feeling is mutual.

Acquiring primo IT gurus requires a combination of location, attraction, and extraction. SMEs have to know where to look, how to look, how to entice, and how to sweep the best technical finds right off their feet.

Leverage Blogs & Social Networking Sites

Participate in blogs and social networking sites where top talent communicates about projects and ideas. "Everyone who is really passionate about technology is blogging," says Taylor.

When an SME's IT or data center manager or even the CEO writes a regular blog

about the company's technologies and why they use them, it demonstrates his thought processes and shows another side of him to the IT community. "The best IT talent needs to see that," says Taylor. This helps to attract the kind of talent companies are targeting.

By interacting with IT gurus through popular social networking sites (both LinkedIn [www.linkedin.com] and Twitter [www.twitter.com] are good examples), SMEs can gauge their current projects and skill sets. And if an SME would like to target a company in order to lure its employees away, Taylor has this suggestion: Simply search LinkedIn for people who work for the targeted organization and try to entice them with incentives.

"We recruit using .NET user groups," says Taylor. Through these groups, candidates meet Hollister and each other online first, and then they come in for a casual meeting, have pizza, and talk about the latest in technology. "The best IT talent remembers your company name for being behind the neat, cool thing like this that got their attention," Taylor adds.

Source White Papers, Case Studies & Videos

"Look for IT talent using public resources, such as white papers, case studies, and videos produced by hardware providers who are touting product installations by customers with high-volume shops," says Jack Williams, vice president of

national recruiting at Staffing Technologies (www.stafftechjobs.com). Then, he adds, go after those candidates who are already doing their jobs well; ask them if they are interested and have referrals and take it from there.

Likewise, target companies that host their own data centers or use major colocation facilities. "Now is a great time to source IT talent from companies in the finance/brokerage industry that have been beaten down," Williams says.

Offer Quality-Of-Life Perks

"Almost everyone who is willing to move from company A to company B needs a quality-of-life reason to do it," says Jack Cullen, president of Modis North America (www.modis.com). People want to maintain a work/life balance, stay healthy, and be happy. To achieve that, they want to see options for working from home as much as possible. "People working from home are getting more done than people who are coming into the workplace," says Taylor.

Anything that helps talented staff to enjoy their jobs is a plus. Perks such as gym memberships and free meals are good ways to attract the best IT has to offer. "Flex hours, an inviting work space, daycare—these are all critical quality-of-life factors for IT workers," Cullen says.

Job security is an important quality-of-life issue in a recession, as at any time, explains Collin Mirza, IT manager at talent and outsourcing services provider Yoh's Dallas office (www.yoh.com). The best talent are concerned with the forecast for the company's growth as a reflection of its ability to offer job security. The company must have plans to invest in new technologies and otherwise be ready to convince the prospective talent that the company will thrive.

Offer Recruits Their Dream Jobs

The best IT talent have certain criteria in common for their dream jobs. Offer them that, and they will start coming out of the woodwork. First, they want interesting work with state-of-the-art technologies rather than simply maintain legacy systems. "If it is boring work, even when the money is good, many IT folks turn away from such opportunities," says Williams.

Easiest To Implement:

Use Internships Wisely

Internships are a great way to trial IT talent before making the long-term hiring commitment and build employee loyalty at the same time, explains Jack Cullen, president of Modis North America (www.modis.com). Managers use internships to scoop up talented IT workers before they hit the real world and see what else is out there.

To make sure the internship is appealing to college-level candidates, assign them to work with software or technologies that are interesting to the masses in their age group, emphasizes Crystal Taylor, staffing consultant for Hollister's Technology Division (www.hollisterstaff.com). These candidates want to know that they can be part of an exciting future opportunity where they can make a real impact on their peers.

When considering interns, use a screening process and testing tools to assess their technical proficiency, Cullen notes, "and remember that they have limited knowledge. Their success or failure rests with their managers."

Best Tip:

Use A Hybrid Interviewing Process

"Having the talent does not mean [job candidates] have good manners or play well with others," says Jack Williams, vice president of national recruiting at Staffing Technologies (www.stafftechjobs.com). To ensure that a candidate is a good fit for an SME's cultural environment, use a larger interview process. Have prospects meet with five or six employees from multiple divisions, such as operations, sales, and recruiting, in addition to IT, to get a true 360-degree perspective of them.

"Use a behavioral interviewer as a consultant for the final objective piece of the puzzle. We pay this consultant to assess the candidate and say, 'yes, this candidate is strong,' or, 'no, they are not a cultural fit.' Our consultant bats very close to .1000 on this," says Williams.

BONUS TIPS

■ Ignore the job boards.

"You are not going to find these people on the job boards," says Crystal Taylor, staffing consultant for Hollister's Technology Division (www.hollisterstaff.com). Instead, position the SME's brand and advertise in a way that makes

the organization look new, trendy, and exciting, Taylor notes. This will help to attract the best talent.

■ Penetrate the inner sanctum. The best IT talent hangs out with like-minded people on the same level with the same interests. "Penetrate

their inner circles. Referrals alone do not necessarily lead to the best talent. Find out where they go to look for jobs, then counter that by meeting them [there, where they go to look for jobs]," says Collin Mirza, an IT manager at Yoh's Dallas office (www.yoh.com).

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

Curtains, Strip Doors & More

Simplex Isolation Systems Helps SMEs Close In On Environmental Isolation

by Holly Dolezalek

SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING, refrigerated storage, data centers, and industrial manufacturing: What do these industries have in common? They all have occasion to separate one part of a facility from another in order to control temperature, humidity, dust, light, noise, or other conditions. And that's the niche for Simplex Isolation Systems.

Founded in 1979, Simplex (800/854-7951; www.simplexstripdoors.com) has manufacturing facilities in Fontana, Calif., and satellite sales offices in Massachusetts and Georgia. The company creates modular cleanroom products, isolation curtains, strip doors, and other products that help SMEs enclose or isolate parts of their facilities. Simplex is a privately owned company, but according to its president, Duane McKinnon, the company is earning \$7 million every year and growing all the time.

Simplex has distributors in Europe, the Middle East, and Taiwan, but about 90% of the company's sales are here in North America, primarily in the United States with some in Canada and Mexico.

Solutions For Many Situations

A large part of Simplex's business comes from factories, which use its modular walls and enclosures to isolate machines that need particular environmental conditions or protection from contamination. Semiconductor and medical device manufacturers use a lot of these enclosures, and they make up a significant portion of the business. McKinnon estimates that about half of Simplex's sales come from medical devices

and pharmaceutical manufacturing, while another quarter comes from semiconductor and aerospace operations. The rest is industrial applications, such as warehouse dividers or refrigerated storage areas.

For example, the SIS 797 is a modular panel system that can create divider walls or total enclosures. It is often used in pharmaceutical or medical device manufacturing and is heavier-duty than the SIS 212, which is more often used in industrial applications. The SIS 797 has urethane closed-cell foam gaskets to seal frame-to-frame connections, vinyl inserts that lock into the frame for an airtight seal, and interchangeable walls for future expansion.

One of Simplex's best-known product lines is the AirBlock curtain line. AirBlock curtains, sold as strip doors (series of overlapping vinyl strips) or softwalls (solid sheet curtains), are used primarily to manage temperature, especially in data centers and refrigerated storage or manufacturing areas. They can also control dust, isolate paint booths, and separate one part of a facility from another while maintaining a clear view.

The company's newest product is the GatorJaw multipurpose aluminum frame system, which allows companies to build safety walls, benches, cabinets, and other structures in their manufacturing facilities.

"Our claim to fame is simple isolation and modularity, because our products are easy to install and can be readily rearranged, unlike permanent construction," McKinnon says.

McKinnon says that the company's goal is to be more than just a supplier of multi-purpose environmental isolation products, although right now that's what sets it apart from its competition. Many curtain makers only make curtains and don't compete in other types of enclosures, or they specialize in curtains for industrial use but not in the higher-grade applications such as semiconductor or medical device manufacturing. In the cleanroom market particularly, he says, Simplex is the only company building modular rooms in aluminum.

Energy Needs & Changing Technology

Energy savings are a sub-niche of what the company's been doing for a long time. McKinnon says that as more industries get concerned about consuming less electricity, both for practical and social reasons, they tend to discover the value of Simplex's products. That's why Simplex is trying to position itself not just as a purveyor of the

products that save energy but as a one-stop shop for all kinds of environmental needs, whether it's temperature control, energy use, contamination prevention, or other problems.

"We want to be known as a company that can solve problems in these areas," McKinnon says. That opportunity also represents a challenge, though. Especially in the data center market, McKinnon explains, the rush to save energy has resulted in a lot of people being interested in the issue but also a lot of people who know nothing about it. The company finds itself doing a lot of education in how to use its products to save energy and how it works, as well as the economics of spending some money now to save more money later.

Another key driver of the company's growth is the way the manufacturing industry continually changes. Technology that was formerly only needed in obvious cleanroom industries such as semiconductor manufacturing is now necessary in much less obvious ones. "Cleanroom technology continually trickles down to other industries," McKinnon says. "For example, there are chips in more and more products—even toasters—and as safety and quality controls get tighter, there's more need for what we offer."

Looking Ahead

Even in an industry where Simplex has some natural advantages, the company is pushing forward in new directions. The polyvinyl chloride, or PVC, that most of its curtains are made of is already recyclable, but the company is working on ways to manufacture PVC so that it's easier to do so. "We're constantly trying to develop better raw material, and we hope to make PVCs that last longer, are more fire-retardant, and are manufactured in a more energy-efficient way," McKinnon says.

The company is also trying to diversify its product line as it pushes its existing enclosure products into new markets. For example, the data center market is a big focus for Simplex, particularly because of its strip doors and softwalls (both of which are different forms of PVC curtains). But there are uses for hardwall enclosures in data centers, as well, and Simplex hopes to grow that market and others where curtains have been the typical choice.

McKinnon notes that this isn't the first time Simplex has found or created new markets, such as when a big share of semiconductor manufacturing went overseas in the '90s. "We've had to shift in our history, and we will again," McKinnon says. P



THREE QUESTIONS

Server Technology Lets Companies See More Green

Environmentally Friendly Intelligent Power Distribution Products Lower Data Center Energy Usage

by Joseph Pasquini

FOUNDED IN 1984, Reno, Nev.-based Server Technology designs and manufactures a complete portfolio of power distribution solutions intended to maximize system availability and improve power management within the data center.

Calvin Nicholson is the director of product marketing for Server Technology (800/835-1515; www.servertech.com). Nicholson, who holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering and a Masters degree in Business Administration, has more than 11 years of experience in process control instrumentation.

■ What are the biggest IT-related issues facing today's small to midsized enterprise?

Nicholson says that both SMEs and larger organizations need to continue to focus on reducing data center energy costs. "Data centers are demanding new technology solutions," and more and more data center administrators are calling for a renewed search for answers to a number of energy-centric challenges, he says.

According to Nicholson, the increasing demand for IT services characteristically results in the need to expand facility infrastructure. The price of doing so, however, is not just limited to rising capital and operating costs. Such expansion also further taxes an already strained power grid and adds to a company's carbon emissions.

Nicholson believes that a long-term energy plan will lower a company's total cost of ownership and therefore provide a greater degree of sustainability. "Clearly, power monitoring and efficiency are going to be key elements for data centers in the years to come," says Nicholson, who adds that such improvements cannot be made without accurate measurement.

■ What should Processor readers know about your company's products?

Besides the servers themselves, Nicholson contends that the most intelligent device within a data center rack is the power distribution unit. "It distributes all the power to the devices and has a long list of other features and functions for monitoring, management, and control of power within the cabinet," says Nicholson. "The PDU is the logical choice when looking at power demand and

monitoring per outlet, device, application, cabinets, or groups of cabinets within the data center."

Server Technology's latest product offerings can measure a load's power usage in kilowatts and kilowatt hours. "Per Outlet Power Sensing (POPS) and the software management tool Sentry Power Manager (SPM) aggregate all this information for reporting, trending, and communication with other systems . . . and provide information required to determine the energy efficiency of a data center," says Nicholson. Power measurements taken by POPS-enabled devices can be made per outlet, device, groups of devices, cabinet, rows of cabinets, or even the entire data center floor itself. Power information includes current, voltage, apparent power, crest factor, and power factor.

Server Technology also offers a complete line of Basic, Metered, Smart, and Switched PDU products for a wide array of AC and DC power applications. "We offer a complete product range . . . to cover all countries and applications," says Nicholson.

■ What makes your company unique?

Nicholson says Server Technology's corporate philosophy specifically targets power within the data center equipment cabinet. "We have the largest group of engineers in the industry focused solely on cabinet power," he says. "This allows us to develop new solutions quickly and provide custom PDU solutions where the quantities are justified. As the only PDU supplier to take outlet power sensing technology and apply it to real-world power monitoring applications, developing custom cutting-edge solutions [keeps] us at the front of the technology curve and in tune with industry demands and trends."



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